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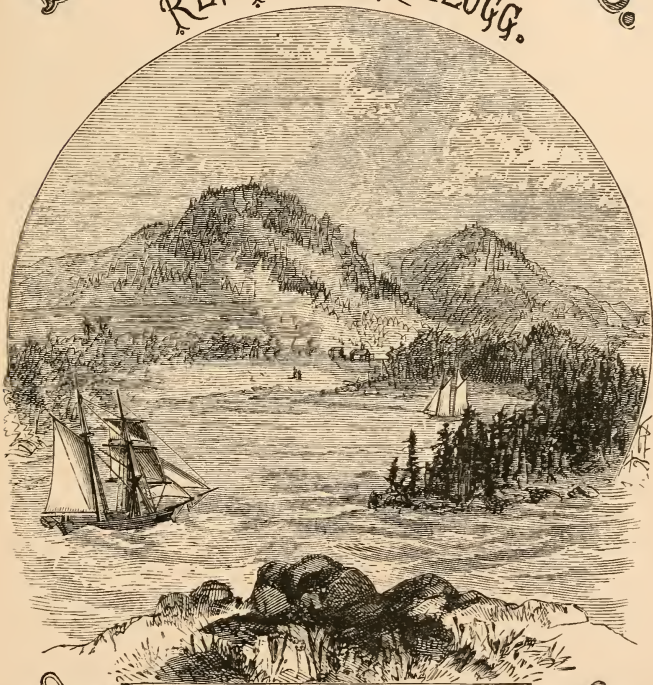
BEN, JR., TRIES HIS GOAD. — Page 78.

JOHN W. DICKERSON



# ELM ISLAND STORIES.

BY  
REV. ELIJAH KELLOGG.



HARDSCRABBLE

JOHN ANDREW—SON

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ELM ISLAND STORIES.

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THE

HARD-SCRABBLE

OF

ELM ISLAND.

BY

REV. ELIJAH KELLOGG,

AUTHOR OF "LION BEN OF ELM ISLAND," "CHARLIE BELL OF ELM ISLAND,"  
"THE ARK OF ELM ISLAND," "THE BOY FARMERS OF ELM  
ISLAND," "THE YOUNG SHIP-BUILDERS  
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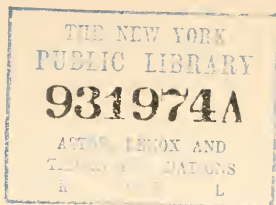
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## PREFACE.

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THIS volume of the series finds the boys entering upon manhood. Already, by integrity and energy, have they secured the respect and confidence of their employers and the community.

Isaac at sea, John behind the anvil, Fred in trade, and Charlie in the shipyard. Fired by the success of Lion Ben, and the spirit of enterprise abroad, among a people who, having burst the shackles of arbitrary power, were leaping forward, with long strides, in pursuit of wealth, knowledge, and power, they resolve to build a vessel. When, by severe toil, and all manner of make-shifts, they have completed the hull, their means fail. Roused by necessity to still greater efforts, they weave the canvas for the

sails in household looms, betake themselves to the depths of the forest, there spend an entire winter hunting and trapping. When the spring opens, they build canoes of bark, and return by water, unloading their furs, and carrying their canoes round the rapids, thus obtaining sufficient to accomplish their purpose.

So severe and protracted has been the conflict, they call their vessel the Hard-Scrabble.

She arrives at Martinique during the contest occasioned by the French revolution; war prices are obtained for the cargo, affording a most ample return. The property thus acquired is used to create business for the benefit of the community.

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THE  
HARD-SCRABBLE OF ELM ISLAND.

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CHAPTER I.

INSTINCT TRIUMPHANT.

WE took leave of our young friends at the close of the previous volume as they separated, John to return to the blacksmith's shop at Portland, Charlie to the ship-yard at Stroudwater, while Fred Williams remained in his store, which was in one part of his father's mill.

On Elm Island, Lion Ben was recovering from a severe sickness, through which he had passed without any other attendance than that of his wife, or medicine save those simple remedies which nature and experience had taught our mothers, or had been learned from the red man.

As Ben was not reduced by bleeding or purgatives, — the mode of medical practice prevalent in those days, — he gained strength rapidly after the

first few weeks, soon being able to go about the house, and at length to extend his excursions to the workshop and barn.

He soon discovered that the partridges were missing; and upon asking Sally, she told him she remembered having seen them a week before, but had been so much occupied since that she had not given any attention to them.

“Then they are gone,” replied Ben; “some owl or hawk has carried them off.”

“I don’t believe they would go of their own accord,” said Sally; “they seemed just as tame and contented as the rest. Perhaps the coons have got them. There are no skunks or foxes on the island.”

“That’s it. I’m sorry, because Charlie will feel bad about it.”

A few days after, Ben went out quite early in the morning to the barn, and instantly returning, called Sally to the door, and told her to stand still and listen.

Soon a sound was heard in the woods, like that of distant thunder.

“Do you hear that noise, Sally?”

“Yes; what is it?”

“It is one of Charlie’s partridges drumming.

They have taken to the woods. Uncle Isaac said they would, but I didn't believe it. It's all the better; they will breed, and fill the island full in a few years, and get their own living. Charlie will be glad of it, for he will have them to shoot."

"But won't they fly away?"

"No; it's too far from the main land. They can't fly but a little way before they have to light. Thus we shall have coons, partridges, and gray squirrels grow at our own door."

"How nice it will be for Charlie to have all these things right on the island! He loves dearly, after supper, when he has done a good day's work, to go shooting. How much better it would be, when he was tired and had not much time, to be able to find game here, instead of pulling three or four miles to some ledge or island!"

"Yes, this island is so large, we might have almost anything, except wolves, bears, and foxes; we shouldn't want them."

"Ben, what are you going to do with the corn-house that Charlie made? You don't want two corn-houses."

"I thought, when I was able, I would cut off the legs, and make a pigsty of it. 'Twould make a capital one. He needn't have set it up on posts.

There are no mice here ; but I suppose he thought he must make it just like Uncle Isaac's."

"I never would make a pigsty of it in this world, it is so handsome. Charlie took so much pains with it, and was so proud of it when he got it done. Give it to me."

"What do you want of it?"

"O, I want to keep flax and yarn there in the summer, and perhaps put the loom there."

"Well, I'll stop up the openings left to air the corn, and you may have it."

## CHAPTER II.

“I'LL GIVE HIM QUICKSILVER.”

THE partial reformation in James Welch, to which his father referred in the conversation with Captain Rhines, already narrated, proved to be, like too many of those delusive hopes to which fond parents cling as drowning men to straws, void of foundation; and the father, driven to extremity, and perceiving at length that much of the criminal conduct of the son lay at the door of his own indulgence, determined to use sharper measures.

He informed James that he must go to Elm Island for the summer, there struggle with his habits, in the absence of outward temptation, or leave his house forever; that his mother, utterly discouraged, had come to the same conclusion.

James Welch, who, on the 15th of June, came to Elm Island, and became an inmate of Ben's family, was a young man of superior general ability, remarkable business talent, fine appearance, affectionate, generous disposition, although of has-

ty temper, and exceedingly attractive in his manners.

He was passionately fond of all out-door recreations; but a drunkard at two-and-twenty. He proved a great accession to the society on Elm Island, being an excellent singer, fond of children, and rare company for Bennie, who was lonely enough without Charlie. They all enjoyed themselves finely, sitting on the door-stone at twilight, and singing together.

It was difficult even for Ben, but especially for Sally, to credit the stories they had heard of him.

As his father had predicted, the first time he came in contact with Uncle Isaac, he conceived a liking for him, which continually increased.

He soon learned to manage a boat; and Captain Rhines let him take his, and keep her at the island, although he took the precaution, unknown to Welch, to cut her sails down.

He would take this boat, and go over to Uncle Isaac's Point; if he was working, off coat, and help him, in order that Uncle Isaac might be able to fish or hunt with him.

He was naturally of a mechanical turn, and would amuse himself in the shop with the tools. Indeed, he was, with one exception, universally



liked. He could not make friends with Tige, and never dared to go to Captain Rhines's in the evening. With Sailor and Uncle Isaac's Watch he was a sworn friend; but Tige would have nothing to do with him, and it was by no means safe to *force* attentions upon Tige.

His attenuated limbs became round and plump with muscle; his haggard cheeks began to crimson; his step regained the elasticity, and his eye the fire, of youth, which seemed forever to have departed.

Uncle Isaac said he was as fine-looking and good-hearted a fellow as ever the sun shone upon.

He learned, after upsetting several times, to manage the birch. Uncle Isaac permitted him to keep her at the island. Thus he had two boats, and when it was calm, would take her, paddle over to the main, and up the river, following all its windings. In one of these excursions, he discovered Pleasant Cove. Enraptured with the beauty of the spot, he carried his canoe around the fall, and paddled up the brook into the pond.

"Ben," said he, on his return, "I have known people spend thousands of dollars to make a beautiful place, and not obtain anything half so fine as the place I have seen to-day. I mean to ask father to buy it. Would Charlie sell it?"

“When he sells himself,” replied Sally. “Besides, there’s another party as much attached to it as he is.”

“Well, I mean to sketch it, at any rate.”

Matters went on thus pleasantly for some time. James would often start off, taking a luncheon, fishing-lines, cooking utensils, and be gone a day or two, sometimes longer, camping in the woods, sleeping at Captain Rhines’s or Uncle Isaac’s, just as it happened. Sometimes the first thing they would know of him, he would make his appearance at the breakfast-table, having come across in the night.

His parents, who were informed of his good doings by Captain Rhines, and especially of his friendship with Uncle Isaac, with that parental credulity ever prone to catch at the shadow of a hope, were greatly encouraged.

“No one,” wrote his father, in reply, “could like Uncle Isaac so well as I know he does unless there was some good in them, and some hope of them.”

Captain Rhines shook his head. He had seen, in a life spent at sea, too much of the strength of the appetite for liquor to leap at conclusions.

One morning after breakfast, as Ben was going

to the field, he saw James, as they now called him, paddling out of the cove in the birch. Two days after, about ten o'clock in the forenoon, Uncle Isaac espied from his point the birch half way over to Elm Island. She was apparently empty, drifting down the bay with the tide.

He waited a while, and seeing no one coming after her, took his boat, and pulled off, when he found James Welch flat on his back in the bottom of her, and an empty bottle beside him. He was completely stupefied with liquor. It appeared afterwards that he had gone along shore gunning, camped a night in the woods, and the next afternoon came upon some men who were making pot-ash, and well provided with liquor. They offered him some. This awoke the slumbering appetite. He bought a bottle, and kept drinking. Through the aid of that Providence which seems to watch over drunkards, he made out to get into the birch, and push off, when becoming helpless, the tide was drifting him to sea. Uncle Isaac, with a sad heart, towed the birch, with its occupant, to the island. Ben took him up in his arms, carried him to the house, and laid him on the bed.

Sally, who had felt greatly encouraged, was affected to tears.

“Stop to dinner, Uncle Isaac.”

“I’ll stop and rest, and cool off, Benjamin; but as for eating, this thing has taken away all my appetite.”

“I’m sorry for his poor parents; but I’m afraid it’s no use.”

“O, Ben, it’s too much! It’s more than I can bear to see so fine a young fellow go to ruin right before my eyes! We’ve done all that can be done in the way of counsel, coaxing, and kindness. I mean to give him a dose of quicksilver.”

When James Welch recovered his senses, his reflections were most harrowing. Having formed a strong and healthy attachment to Ben and his family, he was deeply mortified when he reflected upon the exhibition he had made of himself before them. But he was, most of all, attached to Uncle Isaac, and loved him with all his heart. How he got back to the island, whether Uncle Isaac knew what had taken place, were questions he could not solve, and was too proud to ask.

He went to the cove. The birch was there. He then concluded that Ben went in search of and picked him up; that Uncle Isaac knew nothing about it, and had half a mind to go over and see him; but he was by no means sure that Ben would

permit it. His pride inclined him to remain where he was, rather than ask or attempt to go and be prevented. Ben had not made the most distant allusion to his conduct; but he saw he kept his eye on him, and knew he was in the hands of a giant.

He wandered over the island a day or two, miserable enough, and for the first time in his life really sorry for his acts. While in this state of suspense and misery, uncertain whether he was a prisoner or not, Uncle Isaac came to the island, apparently as cordial as ever, and invited him to go after fowl. The invitation was most joyfully accepted, and they set out. He now felt sure that Uncle Isaac was ignorant of all that had taken place; but he was soon undeceived.

They killed a few birds; then went to Pleasant Cove, and landing, sat down to rest beneath the birches at Cross-root Spring, when Uncle Isaac, in a kind but commanding tone, said, —

“James, I was at work last Tuesday forenoon on the eend of my p'int, and happening to look off in the bay, I saw the birch drifting about. Going to see what was the matter, found you dead drunk in the bottom of her. Don't you feel ashamed of yourself?”

The fiery temper of the young man was roused in an instant by this blunt question. Forgetting the usual urbanity of his manners, and the deference he always paid to his friend, he exclaimed, —

“What concern is that to you? I should like to know what business you have to go nosing round after me, watching my proceedings?”

“The birch was mine. I had a perfect right, and it was my duty, to look after my own property when I saw it adrift and likely to go to sea. It is, moreover, the duty of every one who loves his neighbor to give seasonable advice, and even to reprove, in a kind spirit, a young man who is ruining himself, bringing disgrace upon his friends, and setting a bad example to those who have had fewer privileges.”

“Murch, you ignorant, meddlesome old codger you! Because I have permitted you some liberties, you presume on my condescension to insult me. But,” he replied, with an awful oath, “I’ll make you know your place! I’ll trample you under my feet!”

“Please not swear in my presence, young man. It’s wrong, and hurts my feelings. I am indeed ignorant, as you say, having had but few privileges; but I certainly have the advantage of you in one

thing. I have made the best use I know how of the few a kind Providence has given me. Neither am I a pauper, swearer, drunkard, or thief."

"This to *me*, you old villain!" exclaimed Welch, leaping to his feet, with both fists clinched, and livid with passion. "Take every word of that back, and humbly ask my pardon, or I'll beat you like a dog."

A quiet smile played over the features of Uncle Isaac, as he replied, "I do love to see a mud-puddle in a squall."

Pulling a bulrush out of a clump that grew beside the spring, he flung it across one of the enormous roots of the birch that towered above them.

"You speak of beating me, young man. What that rush is to this birch would you be in my hands. You have drunk too much liquor to have any strength, even if you was made for it, which you are not. Just open these fists, which look more like potato-balls than anything else. Sit down on that flat rock, and listen to what I have to say, or I shall be tempted to call you a fool, which is contrary to Scripture. 'A little pot soon biles over.' If I had no more government over myself than you have, I should set you on your head in this spring, when you would probably die

by water, which is a much more respectable death than the one you seem to be preparing yourself for."

"I will leave you, at any rate," replied Welch, in a much more subdued tone; for he now bethought himself that he was in the woods, miles from any human being, and entirely in the power of a man whom he had most grossly insulted and threatened, and whose forbearance he might well distrust.

"No, you won't, except you can outrun a man who has run down a bull-moose more than once or twice. Did you hear me tell you to sit down?"

This was spoken in a tone so peremptory that Welch obeyed at once, trembling with passion and fear. James Welch was the idol of his parents, and with an overweening affection by no means uncommon, they had injured him by indulgence.

Uncle Isaac, with that instinctive discernment of character that can neither be learned nor taught, had become aware of this. He had also, during their long and familiar intercourse, obtained an accurate knowledge of his character; as he would have phrased it, "knew just how much of sound wood there was in him to nail to."

In view of the estimate thus formed, he had resolved, as he told Ben, to give him quicksilver.



This was a metaphoric term for stringent measures, borrowed by Uncle Isaac from the practice of physicians in his day, who were accustomed, in severe cases of stoppage, where life was at stake, to give quicksilver, which, by its weight, was sure to force a passage, either by the ordinary channel, in which event the patient recovered, or through the walls of the intestines, when death was the result. Thus it became a synonyme for "kill or cure."

"I have said," he continued, addressing his involuntary listener, "that you are a profane swearer and a drunkard. You have sworn in my presence. I found you drunk in my birch, and it is well known that these are your customary habits. You are also a pauper. All property, everything that goes to support life, in these parts, of any amount, comes by the hard work of somebody, — either bone labor or brain labor, — the labor of those who now possess it, or of those from whom they inherited it. That, I take it, you can't deny, though you've been to school and I'aint. If a great, stout, hearty feller, able to work, should go about the country, eating the bread and wearing the clothes somebody else earned, sleeping in the beds and warmed by the fires that others provided, I take it there wouldn't be much doubt he was a pauper. That's

just the way with you. You have eaten your three meals a day ever since you was born, and never earned one — no, not the salt that seasoned them. That makes you out to be a pauper, and it's only your father that keeps you off the town. Everybody who lives in society is bound to do something for the society in which he lives — to help bear its burden, and return something for the benefits he receives from his neighbor, and be a man among men. If he don't do it, he's not one whit better than a thief, because he takes from the common stock, eats up what ought to go to those who ain't able to earn it, and he makes no return to society for what he draws. That's just what you are doing. You are useless, which seems to me to be the meanest of all things, just about as bad as being a drunkard or thief. You are not of so much account as one of the clams in these flats, or one of the frogs in this spring, for they answer the end of their existence, and get an honest living, which you don't. Your father and mother begun the world with nothing but their heads and hands; and your father, moreover, had to support your grandfather after his misfortune, and pay his debts; but by industry, good principles, and the blessing of God on their labor, they have got together a

large property, and bear nobly their share of the burdens of society. They have spent — I would say, thrown away — a mint of money on you; given you the best of larning, the best of opportunities to go into business, do for yourself and others, make something of yourself, and be looked up to; but here you are at two-and-twenty years of age. You've done nothing, you're good for nothing, and are going to the devil as fast as you can. Look at Charlie Bell. He came to Elm Island a poor, ragged orphan. See what he's made of himself. Talk about beating me! He could lay you on your back faster than you could get up. Look at Fred Williams. His father and mother never knew how to treat a child, always hectoring and fretting him; and now that his father is poorly, and can do but little, that boy is at work from daylight till dark, tending mill and store, making fish, and seeing to the whole family; while you are lazing round here, and can't be trusted with yourself, spending money you never earned a dollar of, and killing the best of parents by inches. Look at John Rhines. Yes, there's a case in *pint*. Look at that boy. He might have staid at home, worked or played, laid abed or got up, as he liked; for his father is indulgent, and as well off as

yours, considering the small expense at which he lives, and that he hasn't got a reprobate son to break his heart, and spend his hard earnings. There he is, larning a blacksmith's trade; up early and late, sweating at the anvil. He scorns to live on his father and grandsir's substance. Yes, and I may say your grandsir, for Elm Island stood in his name, though he would have lost it shortly, for the mortgage had nearly eaten it up, when your father, from his own earnings, cleared it. Yes, and took care of your grandsir in his old age. When your father is in his grave, which will be shortly unless you turn over a new leaf, you will be living on what he leaves, gnawing the bones of the dead — a business that I never knew any dumb cretur to foller for a living but a wolf. When you die, you'll be no more missed than yonder dead limb on that leaning beech. Now, if you ain't the smallest, pitifulest consarn there is round here, I should like to know who is. There's another thing to be thought of, young man. Where God has given great capacity and great privileges, there's great accountability; there's Holy Scripture for that. You *may* see the time that you will wish you had been born a fool, or not born at all. Come, it's time we were going."

Welch uttered not a word in reply, or on the way home.

“What have you done to him?” asked Ben, astonished at the appearance of Welch.

“Given him quicksilver, and it’s my opinion ’twill either kill or cure. I do hope he’ll rally, for I love the young man, though I felt it my duty to speak quite plain to him. Indeed, I spoke quite plain to him. He feels bad, Benjamin—all mixed up, half crazy. We must let him sweat in his grease. I shouldn’t wonder if he had a strong craving to drown trouble in liquor. I think you had better keep him on the island for a day or two.”

When James Welch got out of the boat, he would have killed Uncle Isaac if he could. O, how he wished he had the strength of Ben! But God generally gives great strength, and a mild temper in connection with it, to those who know how to use it.

He declined coming to the supper-table, saying he was unwell, and shutting himself in his room, paced the floor till midnight, half demented. At length there came over him a craving for liquor, that he might escape from himself in the delirium or stupor of intoxication. He knew the men who were making potash had half a barrel of New Eng-

land rum in their camp, and went to the shore resolved to go after some ; but Ben had hauled the boats so far up on the grass-ground that he was unable to launch any of them.

Foiled in this, he bathed his burning forehead in sea-water, and sat down on the rocks of the eastern point, beneath the light of the stars.

No sound disturbed the night, save the low, peculiar murmur of the tide, as it crept around the foot of the cliff. The first paroxysm of passion had passed away. He recalled the stinging truths to which he had so unwillingly listened. They no longer excited his anger, but appeared to him in a very different light. His ingratitude to his parents assumed a new aspect when presented by another, and touched him to the heart. He could no longer doubt that Uncle Isaac had faithfully portrayed the estimation in which he was held by the community at large.

No part of the conversation had touched him so nearly, or cut so deep, as the parallel instituted between himself and John Rhines. So completely was he absorbed in thought, that the flowing tide wet him to the knees unperceived.

In that still midnight hour, on the ocean cliff, the better nature of James Welch won the victory.

“Uncle Isaac is right,” he said. “I have been a drunkard, swearer, pauper, and thief. But from this hour I am so no more.”

The gray light of morning was breaking, as, utterly exhausted in mind and body, he flung himself upon the bed, and sank into a profound sleep. The next day Ben noted the change, and, surprised by his offering to help him about his work, shoved the boats into the water. In the course of the week, James took the boat, and told Ben he was going over to see Uncle Isaac. Before he had fairly cleared the harbor, Ben entered the house at a rate so unusual — for he was generally quite moderate in his motions — and a face so replete with joyful emotions, that Sally instantly exclaimed, —

“Why, Ben, what has happened?”

“The best thing that could happen. James has gone over to Uncle Isaac’s.”

“Glory to God! He’s all right, or he never would do that.”

James and Uncle Isaac came back together in the afternoon, and before night there was another auger-hole in the great maple.

Mr. Welch soon received a letter from his son, telling him all that had transpired, and asking permission to come home and go to work.

“Blessed be God!” exclaimed the delighted father. “My last days are going to be my best days.”

The reform proved permanent. James Welch became a partner with his father, and assumed the position for which his abilities qualified him. In after years, he often visited the spot where this singular scene was enacted, and the fountain was ever after, by universal consent, called Quicksilver Spring. In process of time the first syllable was dropped, and many who are familiar with Silver Spring are ignorant of the circumstances from whence it derived its present name.



### CHAPTER III.

#### THE BOYS CATCH THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE.

AFTER the departure of James Welch, nothing worthy of note occurred to disturb the quiet enjoyment of life on Elm Island.

Upon Ben's recovery in the spring, he had hired Robert Yelf for the summer.

Ben, Jr., who now began to manifest as great a capacity for work as he had heretofore evinced for mischief, made himself extremely useful. He assumed the entire charge of the hens, ducks, geese, and turkeys. In the spring he had dropped corn and potatoes, and assisted in planting the garden. He pulled up weeds, carried in wood and chips for his mother, brought up the cows at night, and drove them to pasture in the morning.

After haying, Ben and Yelf finished and rigged the scow, which he had begun before he was taken sick, and built a wharf in the cove, with an inclined platform, over which cattle could be driven to or from the scow. They also built a boat to

take the place of the Perseverance, Jr., from Charlie's moulds, which was an easy matter, as the work was all laid out.

When corn was in the milk, Sally Merrithew ventured to marry Joe Griffin, who had been on probation since he nearly finished Uncle Smullen. Joe built his log house in the midst of a burn, where he had planted corn and sowed wheat in the spring. Ben gave Sally a cow and Captain Rhines a pig to begin housekeeping with, and Ben continued to pasture her sheep on Griffin's Island, as Joe had no land cleared for pasturing sheep, and they were safe from the wolves on that island. Elm Island gradually improved in beauty as Ben ploughed and removed the stumps; and the fruit trees in the new soil increased rapidly in size.

Amid these quiet occupations and enjoyments, interspersed with tramps in the woods, bear-hunts and gunning expeditions with Uncle Isaac, the autumn, winter, and succeeding summer glided rapidly away.

Very different was the appearance of Elm Island, with its comfortable and roomy buildings, broad fields covered with crops, now fast ripening to the harvest, and vocal with the lowing of kine and the song of birds, from its appearance the

morning that Uncle Isaac and Joe Griffin landed on the beach, and startled the herons from their nests with the sound of the axe and the crash of falling trees. Great as was the change that had taken place on Elm Island, it was trifling in comparison with that which obtained in respect to the country at large.

Then it was a period of general poverty and distress, although money was made by individuals through superior energy, tact, and the irregularities then existing in trade, and the intercourse of nations, — Ben and his father being among the fortunate ones.

Then there was neither revenue nor power to collect any; the country oppressed with debt, and no means to pay the old government under which the war of the revolution had been fought — a rope of sand — and no confidence in any quarter. The states were deluged with importations of all kinds — French gewgaws, English broadcloths, iron, cordage, and duck from Russia and Sweden — which people who had any means or credit were but too much inclined to buy, despite the efforts made by the government to discourage it, and encourage home manufacture.

But now the Federal government was estab-

lished, and Washington at its head, with power to form treaties of amity and commerce, lay duties and imposts; the national debt funded, affording an opportunity for safe and profitable investments; and banks were established. The spirit of the country was up, and rose with a bound over all obstacles, ready to grapple with any odds.

Nowhere was the exhilarating influence of the times more eagerly responded to than in the District of Maine, — with a vast extent of sea-coast, and to a great degree aquatic population, and the town of Portland in particular, then but recently arisen from its ashes after its bombardment by the British, and incorporated, with an unrivalled harbor, a back country almost one unbroken forest of timber of all kinds, for which there was an abundant demand at high prices in Europe and the West Indies, with extensive water-power for its manufacture; vast quantities of ship-timber, with mechanics both native and imported; and a population whose energies were *then*, and have *continued* to be, equal to every demand made upon them.

This town was among the first to avail itself of, and profit by, these altered circumstances. Mills were going up on every waterfall, wharves building, distilleries erecting, the keels of vessels laid, and

the roads thronged with teams dragging the masts, spars, and boards to the place of shipment. Mails were established, and a newspaper published. It is easy to perceive what effect these new excitements must make upon boys so impressible as Charlie and John, at work in the midst of such scenes. They read the Cumberland Gazette, which Mr. Starrett took; also the Columbian Centinel, printed at Boston, which he borrowed from one of his neighbors; a Portsmouth paper, which was sent to a Portsmouth man who worked in the shop. They listened with sharp ears to every word of the excited conversation that occurred within their hearing, in that stirring period, when the state of Europe, its politics, its markets, the troubles in France, and their bearing upon the prosperity of America, became subjects of discussion, and were every whit as much interested as the actual participants, and, when they were alone, talked over all they had heard between themselves.

John was now working as a journeyman, and received four-and-six a day. Charlie found an excellent employer in Mr. Foss, who instructed him by every method in his power, and put him on the best work, as he found that he was capable of doing it, and also increased his wages.

Fishing, too, had received the same impulse as other pursuits, not merely by reason of the increased market for fish, and increased facilities for carrying them to foreign parts, but also in consequence of a bounty granted by the government. And Fred Williams, who, to his traffic in fish and groceries, had added the buying of potash, beef, and pork, was steadily acquiring.

As the country became cleared, great numbers of cattle were raised, and salted beef found a ready market in the West Indies for the use of the slavers.

Potash was in great demand in Europe. Fred was able to barter goods for potash, sell it in Boston at a large advance, and thus make a double profit — making more in that way than by all his other traffic.

Charlie, finding that the price of land was rising, sent word to Uncle Isaac to purchase enough more of the heavy pine growth abutting on the back part of his lot to make, with what he already had, four hundred acres; but Uncle Isaac bought the whole lot, and informed Charlie he might have of him, at the price he gave, enough to make out his four hundred acres. Charlie also bought Birch Island of the state, as he did not relish the idea of

being a squatter; and the whole island, containing six acres of first-rate land, covered with a heavy growth of birch, an excellent harbor, and a noble spring of water, cost him only nine shillings. But in those days land on a small island like that was but lightly valued, while birch wood was not considered worth thanking God for.

“Charlie,” said John, in one of those confidential interviews that generally occurred on Saturday night, “couldn’t you build a vessel now?”

“I don’t know but I could. I lined up the Freebooter, while Mr. Foss was laying the keel of another vessel.”

“What is the reason we couldn’t build a vessel? I know I could do the iron-work.”

“I suppose we might do the work if somebody would find the money. It takes a heap of money to build a vessel and fit her for sea.”

“But couldn’t we build one, take time enough, and sell her just as you do the boats — without rigging her?”

“I’ll tell you what we might do.”

“What?”

“Build one, take our own time for it, — I’ve got timber enough on my land to build and load ever so many, — then keep a part of her, and sell the

rest; put our work, my timber, and what little money we could muster, against somebody else's money."

"Yes, we could do that; but I should much rather have her to ourselves, — say you, and I, and Fred."

"We might go to work, cut the timber, and set up a vessel, get her along as far as our means would allow, then let her stand till we could earn more. But we should want a captain."

"That is true; and perhaps Seth Warren or Sydney Chase might take a part, and go in her."

"Yes, that would be a quarter apiece."

"Charlie, I heard Captain Pote say, in this very house last Saturday night, that if anybody could get a load of lumber to the West Indies, at the right time, he could make enough to build another vessel."

"How much do you suppose it costs to build a vessel?"

"I don't know; the rigging and sails are the most. You can build the hull very cheap, so that she will last a little while without much iron fastening; but you must have good rigging and sails, or else you are liable to lose vessel and cargo."

"How much?"



“I know Mr. Foss built a vessel for Weeks and Tucker, hull and spars, and found everything, for fifteen dollars a ton, delivered at Pearson’s breast-work, in Portland.”

“Fifteen hundred dollars for the hull and spars of a vessel of a hundred tons?”

“Yes.”

“Then I’m sure we could build a sloop of fifty.”

“But a sloop of fifty tons wouldn’t be of any use to carry such bulky cargoes as boards, spars, ton-timber, and molasses, which is what we must do.”

“Ye-e-e-e-s.”

Here the conversation came to an abrupt termination by Charlie’s falling asleep.

## CHAPTER IV.

## NEWS FROM HOME.

As the summer was drawing to a close, the evenings grew longer, and these conversations were renewed from time to time, as the boys were excited by hearing of some great slap made by an enterprising captain, or some smuggler making a fortune in one or two trips to Havana. Captain Starrett, the brother of John's master, was an inveterate smuggler. The house was resorted to by seafaring men, masters and mates, and the boys had abundant opportunities to gain information in respect to voyages and profits.

Both Mr. Foss and Mr. Starrett owned a small part of several vessels, which afforded the boys an excellent opportunity to obtain accurate and reliable information, of which they did not hesitate to avail themselves.

As there were no mails east of Portland, the only way in which the boys obtained letters from home was by some coasting vessel. When they

did get one, it was correspondingly valued, read and re-read, commented upon, and formed the subject of conversation for a month. John received a letter one afternoon, and on opening it, found enclosed one from Ben to Charlie.

The moment he was done work at night, he went to Stroudwater to see Charlie, spend the night with him, and walk in before work-hours in the morning. To the no small delight of the boys, they were informed that it was nearly two years since they had been at home, with the exception of the time when Ben was sick; that neither Captain Rhines's family nor Ben and Sally could stand it any longer, and they must come home, and make a good visit.

"Ain't I glad!" cried John.

"Ain't I!" replied Charlie. "I wanted to go bad enough, but I didn't like to lose my time, and was afraid Mr. Foss would think I was a baby."

"That was just the way with me."

Mr. Foss had a vessel that would be ready to launch in a fortnight, and wanted Charlie to stay till after launching. They wrote home by a coaster, that was to sail the next day, that they would start in a fortnight in the boat.

Meanwhile the *Perseverance*, Jr., was hauled up, repaired, re-painted, and put in first-rate order for the cruise. During that fortnight there was but one subject of conversation, and that never grew stale — *home*, and what they should do when they got there.

“There’ll be partridges and coons, lots of ’em, to shoot on Elm Island, Charlie.”

“There’ll be bears on my land, John.”

“Won’t Tige wag his tail off?”

“Won’t Bennie and the baby have a time?”

“What will Fred say?”

“We shall see Uncle Isaac!”

“Yes, and Joe Griffin and Henry.”

“Yes.”

“I wonder if they’ve got any boat there that’ll outsail the *Wings of the Morning*?”

“Do you calculate to come back here, Charlie?”

“Do you?”

“I don’t know; Mr. Starrett wants me to. I shall come if you do.”

“Mr. Foss *wants* me, too; but I can do better building boats at home than I can working in the ship-yard. I’ve learned about all I can here.”

“I could get just as good wages at Wiscasset as I can here, and go home every few weeks.”

“Ain't we going home in a glorious time of year? The sea-fowl will be coming along.”

“There will be berries.”

“Pickerel in my pond.”

“O, Charlie, I'll tell you what we'll do — you, and I, and Fred.”

“What?”

“We'll borrow Uncle Isaac's birch, and go up the brook to the falls, then take her on our shoulders, and carry her round the falls, then follow all the crooks of the brook till we come to the pond. It is real crooked; I dare say 'twould be three or four miles.”

“That would be something we never did; and the water in the pond will be so warm to go in swimming!”

“Yes; I never thought of that.”

“O, John, I tell you, we'll go on to Indian Island, and make a birch of our own — a smasher. I know I can make one.”

“And we'll get Uncle Isaac to work the ends with porcupine quills.”

“Then we shall have the Perseverance, Jr., to go outside in and fish, and take the girls to sail. We've got a boat now — no old dugout — and we'll go exploring just where we like — way down the coast.”

As is often the case with boys, they planned employments and enjoyments enough to occupy a whole summer, while they intended to allow themselves not more than three weeks of vacation at the outside.

“I felt real bad, John, when father wrote that the partridges had gone; but come to think, I’m glad of it, ’cause they’ll breed in the woods, and if I want to try to tame some more, I can find the eggs.”

“I should be; because when it blows, and you can’t get off the island, or any time after supper, you can take the gun, and find them in the yellow birches.”

While the boys are revelling amid these anticipated pleasures, let us note what effect the announcement of their coming produced at home.

## CHAPTER V.

## TIGE'S NOSE BETTER THAN THE CAPTAIN'S SPY-GLASS.

No sooner had Captain Rhines received the letter, informing him of the time at which they expected to set out, than he hurried home with it, and then, getting into his boat, made sail for Elm Island, where his information caused no little gratification. He had scarcely left the shore on his errand, when Elizabeth made the discovery that there was not a needle in the house fit to sew with, nor one grain of beeswax.

“You must go to the store, Elizabeth, and get some needles and wax,” said her mother; “and tell Fred to send me half a yard of cloth from the piece I looked at yesterday. I must finish John’s waistcoat before he comes home.”

Thus Fred was made acquainted with the tidings, and through him Uncle Isaac, Henry Griffin, and Joe.

“I do believe,” said Mrs. Rhines, “that Tige

knows what is going on, for every time John's name is mentioned, he wags his tail, and seems uneasy."

"Knows!" replied the captain; "to be sure he does. Any fool of a dog might know as much as that; and Tige has forgot more than most dogs know. Here, Tige — go find John."

The dog instantly ran to the door, and barked to be let out. After making a tour of the premises, he came in, ran up to John's bedroom, and came down with one of his jackets in his mouth, and laid it at his master's feet.

"See that, and tell me he don't know what we are talking about!"

Ever since Tige had saved little Fannie from drowning, she had been in the habit of making him frequent visits, bringing with her something she knew he would like to eat. Tige never returned the visits, for it was not in accordance with his habits and principles ever to leave the premises, except sent on an errand by his master, or with one of the family; but he always received her with great cordiality. Fannie could talk plain now. Ever since the promise to her from Captain Rhines, that Tige never should be whipped, do what he would, she had entertained a very high



opinion of the captain, who loved dearly to play and romp with her.

While Captain Rhines and his wife were conversing, Fannie came trudging along, with gingerbread and meat in her basket for Tige.

“Good morning, my little woman! Have you come to see me, and have a good frolic?”

“Fannie came to see Tige.”

“Then you think more of Tige than you do of me?”

“I love Tige.”

“That’s a fact.”

I’ve no doubt Tige by this time had his nose in Fannie’s basket.

“Captain Rhines, you know Tige loves babies.”

“Yes, my dear.”

“Don’t you know we have a little baby?”

“Yes.”

“I’ve come for Tige to go and see it.”

“What a comical little thing you are! Well, I suppose he must go. Then you’re not going to stop and play with me?”

“No, sir; because Tige wants to see the baby.”

“He won’t go with her,” said Mrs. Rhines, “without some of us go with him.”

“Yes, he will,” said the captain, “if I tell him to, and give him something to carry.”

“Then you must give him something that he won’t eat, or she’ll give every mite of it to him.”

Captain Rhines filled Fannie’s basket with apples, and put in some flowers, and Mrs. Rhines gave her some cake to eat herself. Tige took the basket in his mouth, and away they went; but Fannie gave him all her cake before she got home.

She made out to get him into the house, where he licked the baby’s face, and frightened it half to death, and then set out for home, refusing the most urgent solicitations to stay to dinner.

Tige also had the promise of going over to Elm Island again, to see the baby there.

The heart of Captain Rhines was bound up in John. Two days had now passed since the time fixed in his mind for their arrival. He became very uneasy. Every few moments he would catch the spy-glass, and run out on the hill to look.

“Why, Captain Rhines,” said his wife, “I don’t think you need laugh any more at us women for being nervous and fidgety when our friends are away! I’m sure you beat us all. Old Aunt Nabby Rideout, of Marblehead, that they say used to bank up her house with tea-grounds, never begun with you! You can’t expect folks that are com-

ing by water to come just at the time they set. You must have patience."

"Patience! I've had patience to kill."

"Perhaps they've had a head wind, or calm."

"No, they haven't! I know how the winds have been. They've had as good and steady a wind as ever blew — just the breeze for a boat."

The next day after this conversation, the captain, after running in and out half of the forenoon with the spy-glass in his hand, said, "Wife, I won't look any more till they come. I'm going to have patience; but there's Tige been laying all the morning before the door, with his nostrils to the wind."

He put the glass in the brackets, and taking up a book, began to read. He had hardly commenced, when a tremendous roar, ending in a prolonged howl, rang through the house.

"Heavens!" cried the captain; "why couldn't I have seen them? I've been looking with all the eyes I've got the whole morning;" and rushing to the door, he caught a glimpse of Tige's tail disappearing round the corner of the wood-pile.

To his astonishment, there was no boat to be seen in the cove, nor in the offing. Turning round to learn what had become of Tige, he espied him

going at full speed across the orchard, clearing logs and fences at a leap, for the main road, emitting sharp, short barks as he ran, and was soon lost to view around a point of thick woods. The captain sat down on a log to see what would turn up next, and in a quarter of an hour was joined by all the family.

“What do you suppose it means?” asked Mrs. Rhines.

“*Means?* It means they are coming along the road. Tige has known it since six o’clock this morning. I knew he did by his actions, and that was what made me so patient.”

“Yes, you was very patient; but what has become of their boat?”

“I don’t know. Perhaps she has sprung a-leak, or they run on to some reef and punched a hole in her. Here they come!” roared the captain, as Tige’s voice was again heard. He was evidently returning, and the barking sounded louder and louder. In a few minutes Tige appeared in view around the point of woods.

He presented a comical appearance. He was coming sidewise, doubled all up like a rainbow, or the colonel’s horse prancing at the head of the regiment general-muster morning, caused by the

effort to keep one eye on the boys and the other on Captain Rhines and his company, and progress at the same time.

These anxiously-expected ones came in sight, each with a pack on his back. John also bore a gun on his shoulder, and Charlie a hatchet in his hand.

"They have travelled all the way!" exclaimed Captain Rhines.

"What are we thinking about! Here it is, most noon, not a thing done towards dinner, and these poor boys tired and half starved!" said Mrs. Rhines.

This was the signal for a general stampede in the direction of the house.

"I'll get some dry wood, and have a fire in no time, wife."

Then, with the combined efforts of these practised hands, a great fire was roaring in the chimney, the teakettle boiling, the table in the floor, and eggs frying by the time that Tige burst into the room, followed by the boys.

"Why, John, how you've grown!" said Captain Rhines, twirling him round on his heel; "and Charlie, too; I believe he has grown more than

you have. There was more chance for it. You was as big as a moose before."

"I guess hard work agrees with both of you," said Mrs. Rhines.

"It always did," replied Charlie. "We're the boys for that."

"Yes," added John, "none of the western boys can lay us on our backs, either. Mother, do your hens lay well?"

"Yes; but what makes you ask that?"

"Because, if you think there's eggs enough in that kettle, you're very much mistaken."

"There's half a bushel in the buttery," said his father. "They'll stay your stomachs, and after dinner I'll kill a fat wether I've got in the barn."

The captain could not well have given stronger evidence of hospitality and glad welcome than by his resolve to kill a wether, that would afford double the wool which could be sheared from an ordinary sheep, as will be evident if we reflect a moment upon the state of affairs at that period. Before the war of the revolution, when the British government was imposing onerous taxes upon our fathers, prohibiting American manufactures, and endeavoring to compel them to purchase those of the mother country, they not only threw the tea

overboard, but in every way attempted to clothe themselves, that they might be independent of Great Britain. In order to be provided with material for cloth, the people of Massachusetts resolved to eat no lamb, and not a butcher dared to offer any for sale. Bounties were offered for wolves, flocks of sheep were increased by every possible means, great quantities of flax were raised, and every household was transposed into a manufactory, where wool and flax were carded, spun, and wove, and colored with barks and roots found in the woods.

“Save your money, and save your country,” became a proverb.

After the war, and at the period of our tale, when the country was oppressed with debt, and its infant manufactures were struggling for existence, when Great Britain, while excluding us from her West India ports, was deluging the country with her manufactures in order to effectually crush our own, all true patriots, and the government to the extent that lay in its power, strove to sustain the old spirit of independence, and raise wool and flax. Captain Rhines very rarely, and Uncle Isaac never, killed a lamb; but on this occasion the glad father was willing to slaughter even a wether.

Evil kills the home-feeling; virtue deepens and strengthens it. The fact that the presence of these boys added so much to the happiness of home, and that they were so happy to get home, was a fine tribute both to their heart and principles.



## CHAPTER VI.

## TELLING AND HEARING THE NEWS.

“WHAT’S the news, father?” asked John, when the protracted meal was at length finished. “Who’s dead? who’s married?”

“Are all well on the island?” interposed Charlie.

“All are first-rate on the island. Aunt Molly Bradish, good old soul! has gone to heaven. She was buried a week ago Tuesday. Nobody else has died that you are much acquainted with; but old Mrs. Yelf is very sick, and you must go and see her. She has talked about you ever since you have been gone, and will never forget the good turns you did her after her husband died.”

“How is Uncle Isaac, father?”

“Smart as a steel trap; has killed lots of birds, and last winter bears, deer, and three wolves; and the last time I rode by there, I saw a seal-skin stretched on the barn.”

“How is Fred?”

"First-rate."

"Has he built a new store?"

"A real nice one."

"And put a T on the wharf?"

"Yes."

"Why don't you talk some, Charlie?" asked John. "You sit there just as mum!"

"He can't get a word in edgewise," said Mrs. Rhines, "you talk so fast yourself."

"Well, then, I'll hold my tongue."

"There's another hole bored in your great maple, Charlie," said Mary.

"There is? Who bored it?"

"Guess."

"Joe Bradish?"

"Guess again."

"Sydney Chase?"

"Guess again. O, you'll never guess! James Welch;" and she told him the story.

"I'll name that spring 'Quicksilver Spring.'"

"Father," said Mary, "you haven't told the boys who is married."

"Indeed, their questions follow each other so fast, I lose my reckoning. Joe Griffin."

"Joe!" cried John. "Where does he live?"

"Right on the shore, between Pleasant Point and Uncle Isaac's, in a log house."

"Then he'll be close to me," said Charlie.

"Yes, only two lots between. They say he's raised the biggest crop of wheat that was ever raised in this town, and has got the handsomest crop of corn growing."

"Then Sally mustered up courage to marry him?"

"*Marry him!* She may thank her stars she got him. Let them talk as much as they like about his being a harum-scarum fellow. There's not a smarter, better-hearted fellow in this place, nor a man of better judgment. He showed a good deal more sense than our Ben, who, folks think, is all sense."

"How, father?"

"Why, Ben built his house, and then set his fire, and liked to have burned up his house, baby, and all the lumber that went into his vessel, and did scorch his wife; but this harum-scarum fellow burnt his land over first, and put something in the ground to live on."

"They say," said Mrs. Rhines, "that they are the most affectionate pair that ever was. Joe thinks there is not her equal in the world."

"That's just what he ought to think, wife. I hope it will last, and not be with them as it was with Joe Gubtail and his Dorcas."

“How was that?”

“Why, he said, when they were first married, he loved her so well he wanted to eat her up, and now he wishes he had.”

“I don’t think it will, for they have been fond of each other since they were children, and ought to be well acquainted.”

“You haven’t said anything about Flour, Captain Rhines,” said Charlie.

“O, he ain’t Flour any longer. He lives in a frame house on his own land, is Mr. Peterson, has money at interest, can read, write, and cipher, and is master-calker at Wiscasset.”

“Good! Won’t we go over and see him? Didn’t they cut up some rusties on Joe when he was married?”

“No.”

“I should have thought the boys would have done something to him to pay him up for all his tricks, for there’s hardly anybody in town but has something laid up against him.”

“So should I,” said John. “I should have thought they would have given him a house-warming, and paid up old scores.”

“I suppose there were good reasons why they didn’t.”

“What were they?”

“One was, that everybody loves and respects his wife; another, that Joe had been very quiet for a long time before he was married, and they didn’t quite like to stir him up again, for fear they might get the worst of it, get into a bear-trap, or he might fire a charge of peas or salt into them. Joe Griffin isn’t a very safe fellow to stir up.”

“I suppose,” said Charlie, “they thought as I did about the bear at Pleasant Cove — if you’ll let me alone I’ll let you alone.”

“That’s it.”

“I can tell you some news,” said Mrs. Rhines.

“Let’s have it, mother.”

“Isaac has arrived.”

“Isaac Murch?”

“Yes.”

“And has come back mate,” said the captain.

“Where is he?”

“In Boston; but he’s coming home to stay some time. They’re going to heave the vessel out, recalk, and overhaul her thoroughly.”

“Where is Henry Griffin?”

“Gone to Liverpool in a snow out of Portland.”

The conversation was now interrupted by the entrance of Fred. While the boys were greeting and talking with him, Mrs. Rhines and the girls embraced the opportunity to clear away the table; and when this necessary duty was accomplished, all drew up, and formed a happy circle.

"Here we are, all together again," said John, thrusting his chair between Charlie and Fred, and taking a hand of each, while Tige, who could bear "no rival near the throne," put his nose in John's lap.

"Now," said Mrs. Rhines, "we have answered all your questions, and told you all the news, we should like to have you tell us some; and first, why did you come afoot? You wrote us you was coming by water. What has become of the boat, Charlie?"

"Sold her to Mr. Foss. Just before we were going to start, he offered me twenty-five dollars for her. I asked John what he thought about it. He said, sell her; 'twould be a great deal better fun to come through the woods, and camp out; that sailing was nothing new to us. So we put our things aboard a coaster, took our packs, and started."

"And you had rather go through all that than

come comfortably in the summer time, with a fair wind, in a good boat?"

"Yes, father; we had a first-rate time. I can tell you they are going ahead in Portland, building vessels at a great rate. Congress has granted money to finish the light on Portland Head, and it's almost done."

"They've got wagons and sleighs there," said Charlie. "They don't ride altogether on horse-back as they do here. In one of these wagons a farmer can carry a whole ox, or three or four calves; carry a barrel of molasses, and two folks ride besides; or eight or ten bushels of potatoes, and whole firkins of butter. They don't have to carry a little, stuck in saddle-bags."

"I should be afraid they would upset," said Mrs. Rhines.

"Father, they've got the biggest ox-wagons, that haul monstrous loads of boards, and the wheels have iron hoops on the rims. Our wheels are all wood."

"You can't expect such things, John, in new places. Portland is an old-settled place."

"They've got a wagon with two horses, that carries the mails and passengers to Portsmouth, to meet the Boston stage. They've got chaises, lots

of them. All the ministers have them; and there's a man, just come there from Newburyport, that's going to make chaises."

"Captain Rhines," said Charlie, "there are big Spanish and English ships come there after spars."

"It must be a great place," said Mary.

"I guess it is. Everybody that lives there says it can't help being a great place. They are expecting it will be an awful big place; and there's a company getting up to build a wharf clear to the channel, — O, I don't dare to tell how long! — with stores on it. They're going to call it Union Wharf."

"Father," said John, "a man came there lately who wears loose breeches that come clear to his shoes. They call 'em pantaloons. Captain Starrett says it's because he's spindle-shanked, and wants to cover his legs up."

In the course of the afternoon, Captain Rhines put the saddle on the horse, and sent Elizabeth over to Uncle Isaac's; and when she returned, both he and his wife came with her.

"Charlie," said Captain Rhines "in the morning you and John must go and see old Mrs. Yelf."

"O, sir, I can't go anywhere or do anything till I see father and mother."



“You must see her, because the poor old lady won’t live long, and she longs to see you. It will take but a few minutes to go over in the morning, and then John can set you on to the island.”

## CHAPTER VII.

## CHARLIE AT HOME AGAIN.

THE next morning, after making their call upon Mrs. Yelf, greatly to the old lady's satisfaction, they started for Elm Island.

Ben and Sally, having been informed by Captain Rhines of the time at which the boys would start, and of the manner in which they expected to come, were equally, with him, eagerly expecting their arrival.

Many times she left her work during the day, and went to the door to see if they were coming. During the period that had elapsed since the brief but glorious career of the West Wind, the old dugouts had either passed into oblivion, or were debased to mere tenders for the whaleboats, which were kept afloat at their moorings, or even used as cars (cages) to keep lobsters and clams alive in. Whaleboats had also increased in numbers, by reason of the impulse given to fishing, and were frequently seen going to and fro in good weather;

and Bennie, who took every sail, it mattered not in what direction they were heading, for the Perseverance, Jr., kept his mother in a constant state of excitement by running into the house, and bawling out, "Marm, they're coming! They're most here!" Ben also frequently, in the course of the day, swept the horizon with his spy-glass. They expected the boys would land at Captain Rhines's first, stop all night, and then John come over with Charlie. Accordingly he frequently inspected the cove, and the adjacent shores, and if he manifested less outward show of interest than his father, it must be attributed to his sluggish temperament, which was less easily roused, and the fact that he had more to occupy him, and was just at that time engaged with his hired man upon a job that interested him exceedingly. He was at work in his orchard.

When Ben declared that he would make cider yet on Elm Island, it was no idle boast. He had gone to work in the best possible way to accomplish his designs. He had, in the first place, burned the land over, the same season in which the growth was cut, and before it was dry, on purpose that the fire should not burn too deep, and consume the vegetable mould down to a bar-

ren subsoil. The growth of wood was also of a kind that was rich in potash, an element in which the apple, of all the trees of the field, delights. Instead of waiting till he had taken several crops from the land, the stumps had decayed, and it was exhausted by many ploughings and plantings, he set out three hundred grafted trees, of choice fruit, that Mr. Welch had given him, right in the ashes, and among the stumps. Wherever a stump interfered with the regularity of the rows, he dug it up, otherwise set the tree close beside it, and the young tree fed upon its decaying roots. In addition to this, the soil was filled with the excrements of sea-fowl, that for centuries had bred upon the island, and it was abundantly supplied with lime from the shells of muscles, cockles, and bones of fish with which they fed their young.

The orchard was upon a southern exposure, sheltered by cliffs, forests, and rising ground from cold and blighting winds, and the bowlders, sprinkled here and there over the surface of the land, were granite. Enjoying all these advantages of soil and exposure, protected with jealous care from the encroachments of cattle, the trees grew more in one year than they would in one of our old exhausted fields in four. Ben, excessively

proud of them, stimulated their growth by every means in his power, especially as he expected Mr. Welch to make him another visit before long, and wanted to show him what could be done on Elm Island, as he had expressed some doubts if apple trees would do anything so near the sea.

He was now engaged in burning the weeds and brush, which had been previously cut and piled up, intending to scatter the ashes around the roots of the young trees. He was also removing the stumps, a sharp drought proving very favorable to his operations. There were a few pine stumps on the piece, which, when not too near an apple tree, were set on fire, and completely exterminated, the fire following the roots into the dry soil, and living there sometimes for weeks.

The greater proportion of the stumps were rock-maple, beech, birch, and oak. The roots of these had become a little tender, and by chopping off some of the larger ones, could be upset and wrenched from the soil with oxen, aided by a pry, to which the great strength of Ben, supplemented by that of Yelf, was applied. Setting cattle for a severe pull, and making them do all they know how, seems to consist in something more than practice. It is a gift, and it was one that Ben possessed in perfection.

When a lad, before he went to sea, he was considered the best teamster in town, except Uncle Isaac. It was the same with Charlie, who had not been accustomed to cattle till he came to the island, while John Rhines, who had all his life been used to driving oxen, evinced neither inclination nor capacity for it. As for Robert Yelf, he couldn't, to save his life, make four cattle pull together, and always, when he got stuck, took off the leading cattle. Those who do possess this gift, like to exercise it: there is to them a strange fascination in driving oxen, so dull and stupid a business to others. It was thus with Ben; no music was so sweet to him as the singing of the links of a chain and the creaking of the bows in the yoke as the cattle settled themselves for a severe pull, their bellies almost touching the ground. He had a noble team,—six oxen,—the smallest ox in the team girthing seven feet three inches, fat and willing. He had them so perfectly trained, that after attaching them to the stump, and placing them for a twitch, he and Yelf would apply their strength to the pry, Ben would speak to the oxen, rip, tear, snap would go the great roots, out would come the stump, taking with it earth, stones, and bushes, while Bennie would

scream, "Get up, Star, you old villian!" pounding on the ground with his stick, till he was red in the face, the baby sitting in his little cart, would crow, and Sailor bark in concert.

It is often that friends, for whom we have been persistently watching, surprise us after all, when we least expect them; it was so in the present instance. Ben was so much occupied in his work that day (and having been disappointed), that after taking a look in the morning, he had not again inspected the bay.

As for Sally, after having cooked up a lot of niceties to welcome the boys, and running to the door to look the greatest part of the time for three or four days, she concluded that something had delayed them at Portland, and there was no telling when to look for them.

Since the stump-pulling had commenced, and the fires been started, Bennie, having changed his playground from the green before the front door, which commanded a full view of the bay, to the orchard, was busily employed roasting clams by a fire made under a pine stump; Sailor was helping him, the cat patiently waiting for her share of the repast, the baby asleep in the cradle, and Sally busy getting dinner. Aided

by all these circumstances, the boys entered the cove unperceived, and with all the caution of whalemén approaching a slumbering whale.

“What a splendid wharf!” whispered Charlie to John, as silently they crept along the foot-path to the house, expecting every moment to hear an alarm. The hop-vine had covered half the roof, and reached the chimney in one broad belt of green, the honeysuckle hung in fragrant festoons around the door and windows; Charlie gave John a punch, and pointed to them, which was answered by a nod.

The doors were all open, for it was a warm day. Slipping off their shoes, they passed on to the kitchen. Sally was frying fish in the Dutch oven, and talking to herself all the while.

“I don’t see what has got those boys: they ought to have been here a week ago. Here I, and all of us, have been watching, and I have been cooking, to have something nice for them when they come. There are the custards, that John likes so well, as sour as swill; the cake all mouldy, and the chicken pie soon will be. Charlie likes warm biscuit so well, I thought we should see them when they got to the other shore, and then I should have time to bake some, and have



them piping hot when they get here; now I don't know what to do. There's that mongrel goose, the first one we have ever killed, Charlie thought so much of them, and took so much pains to raise them, I did mean he should help eat the first one. O dear, I wish I hadn't killed it; but now it's killed and cooked we must eat it, or it will spoil; Charlie ain't here, nor like to be."

"Yes, he is, you good old soul you,"

With a scream of delight Sally flung herself on his neck.

"How you started me, you roguish boy, you and John too. Why boys, where have you been? We've been looking more than a week, with all the eyes in our heads, and you've come at last, just as we had given up."

"What boat is that at the mooring, mother?"

"One your father built the year after you went away."

"I'm right glad, for I've sold mine in Portland, and was afraid I shouldn't have any to sail in. Whose scow is that?"

"Ours; your father and Robert built it."

"Where is father?"

"Out in the orchard, pulling up stumps."

"Come, John, let's go and surprise them."

In this they were disappointed. Sailor espied them, and gave the alarm.

“Why, how you’ve grown, you dear child!” cried Charlie, catching Bennie up in his arms, who came running to meet them.

“I should think somebody else had grown too,” said Ben, taking them both up, setting Charlie astride one of the near oxen’s back, with the child in his arms; “but I believe John has grown the most,” putting his arm around him, with an appearance of great affection.

“What a noble team you’ve got, Ben; are these the same cattle you had when we went away?”

“Yes, all but them sparked ones on forward; they are twins, and are seven feet and a half. I went clear to North Yarmouth after them, and I never have dared to tell how much I gave for them. I’ve never asked them to do anything yet, but what they’ve done it: that yoke ain’t fit for them, it’s too narrow between the bow holes, and hauls upon their necks. Charlie you must make me one.”

“I will, father, I’ll make one that will fit them. But how these apple trees have grown, I couldn’t have believed it possible.”

“Ah, Charlie, what do you think now about

making cider on Elm Island? In three years more some of these largest apple trees will begin to bear, and one of these in the garden, that Uncle Isaac gave you, blossomed last spring."

"Mother says dinner is ready."

"How does the goose go, Charlie?" asked Sally, when they were well entered upon the repast.

"Never tasted anything better in my life," said he, speaking with his mouth full.

"I must go now," said John, when the meal was ended; "I promised father I wouldn't stop."

"No, you won't go," said Sally, "till after supper. I baked some custards for you, and kept them till they were sour. You can't go till I bake some more; so it's no use to talk."

"We'll have supper early," said Ben, "and you can get home before dark."

They spent the time till supper in social chat, and in looking at the crops and improvements that had been made on the island.

Charlie found the swallows had multiplied amazingly, the eaves and rafters of the barn being filled with long rows of nests.

"What a master slat of fowl," said both the boys.

"I shouldn't think you ever killed any," said Charlie.

“We haven’t many,” replied Ben; “we’ve been saving them till you came.”

“Well Charlie,” said he, as they stood at the shore looking after John, as he departed, “I suppose Elm Island seems rather a dull place, and a small affair, after being in such a great place as Portland.”

“Portland!” cried Charlie, in high disdain, “I wouldn’t give a gravel stone on this beach for Portland, and all there is in it.”

“Nor I either. I suppose to-morrow you’ll want to go over and see Joe and Uncle Isaac, and go to Pleasant Cove.”

“Not till that orchard is done. I want to drive those oxen. O, father, won’t we have a good time burning the stumps, putting the ashes round the trees, making it look neat and nice, and picking up all the stones?”

“I see,” replied Ben, “you have brought back the same heart you carried away.”

“Why, father, how could I go right off, when you have got so much to do, and it is such a nice time to do it? Besides, I haven’t seen the maple, nor been up in the big pine; and I’ve only just looked over the fowl, and haven’t taken particular notice of any of them, nor of the

birds; then there's a leg gone out of mother's wash-bench, a latch off the kitchen door, a square of glass broke in the buttery, and that yoke to be made, and the piece must be cut and put to season. You must have a better goad, father; it's a shame to drive such a team with a beech limb. There's a tough little white-oak butt, as blue as a whetstone, in the shop, that Uncle Isaac gave me: I'll make a goad of that. Then I mean to make a pair of cart wheels, such as I saw in Portland, on the Saccarappa teams, and John says he'll put tires on them. Why shouldn't we have things on Elm Island as well as they up there."

"If you're going to do all that, or half of it, you wont get off the island this month."

"I don't know as I shall do it all now, but I'll begin, and I'll make the goad before it's time to go to work to-morrow. Come, father, let us go and split up the butt before dark."

They took the small oak butt, set it on end, Charlie held the axe to the end of it, Ben struck the pole of the axe with a piece of wood, and they split it in halves, saved one half for axe handles, and split the other up fine for goads. Charlie was up betimes in the morning, made a beautiful goad, scraped it with glass, then rubbed it with dogfish

skin, oiled it, and put a brad in it. It was tough as leather. He made another for Bennie, Jr. Proudly the little chap strutted beside Charlie with his goad, kindled fires, heaped the brush and roots on them, roasted clams, baked potatoes in an oven Charlie made for him, and blessed his stars that Charlie had come.

Before two days Charlie had cut down an elm, roughed out a yoke, bored the bow-holes, and put it up in the smoke-hole to season, to be smoothed by and by. He counted sixteen partridges among the yellow birches, but by Ben's advice abstained from killing any till they should have increased in numbers.

“Let them alone, and give them a chance to lay and breed another spring and summer,” said Ben, and then we can shoot as many as we want to eat, and they will hold their own.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

## JOE GRIFFIN AT HOUSEKEEPING.

WHEN Ben, Jr. received his goad, made as smooth as glass and fish-skin could render it, oiled with linseed oil to give it a handsome color and make it more pliable, he was highly gratified. The youngster, however, soon ascertained that in one very important respect it was deficient: there was no brad in it.

The discovery was by no means satisfactory; a goad without a brad, was no goad at all, and he teased Charlie till he put in one of considerable length, as sharp as a needle, but told him he must not stick it into the oxen. It unfortunately happened that this was just the thing Bennie wanted to do, and wanted the brad for. Charlie stuck it into the oxen, and he flattered himself that he could perform equally well. While his father and Yelf were at the pry, he strutted alongside of Charlie, leaping up and down when it came to a severe pull, very red in the

face, smiting on the ground, and screaming, Gee Turk! back Buck! her Spark up, you old villain."

For a while he amused himself by sticking the brad into chips and flinging them to a distance, or impaling wood-worms and grasshoppers; but these amusements soon ceased to be exciting. The little Mischief longed, but didn't *quite dare*, to try it on the oxen; he at length determined to do or die. Watching his opportunity when Charlie's back was turned, he set his teeth, went close to old Turk, shut both eyes, and jabbed the brad into his thigh the whole length, with such good will that the blood followed the steel. All around the scene of labor were great stumps which had been torn from the ground, some of the pines ten or fifteen feet in circumference, sitting on their edges, the sharp points of their roots protruding in all directions. The enraged ox administered a kick that sent Bennie through a thorn bush, in amongst the jagged roots of a pine stump, where he was wedged in fast, screaming piteously. There was, indeed, abundant cause for lamentation; the thorns had torn his hands and the side of his face, the point of a pine root had gone through his upper lip, and the skin was scraped from his thigh.



Notwithstanding his fright and wounds, though the blood was running from his lip and hands, he resolutely refused to be carried to his mother till he obtained his goad, thoroughly convinced that it was a real one, and effectual, clung like bird-lime to the instrument of his misfortunes. The next day being rainy, Charlie went to work in the shop upon a pair of cart wheels, and during the rest of the week continued to work on them.

When Saturday evening came, Sally said to him, "Now, Charlie, not another stroke of work shall you do till you've been to see Uncle Isaac, Joe Griffin, and the rest of your friends. Here you've been away going on two years, and come home for a visit, and stick right down to work the very next day. It's too bad. Uncle Isaac will think you don't care anything about him. I should think you'd want to go to Pleasant Cove."

"So I do, mother; but you know father has been alone a great part of the time, and I wanted to help fix the orchard, get the stuff sawed out for the wheels, and then I'm going to get Uncle Isaac to help me make them."

"Well, when we go over to meeting to-morrow,

I shall leave you, and you must stay till we come over the next Lord's day, and see all hands."

"I will, mother."

John and Charlie went over to Uncle Isaac's and staid two days and nights. There they learned that Isaac, his nephew, was expected that week. From there they went to Joe Griffin's. His farm was situated on a ridge of excellent land that rose gradually from the water, the summit being covered with a mixed growth, in which beech largely predominated, succeeded on the declivity by rock maple, ash, and yellow birch. In front of the house was a cove, with a point on the south-west side, which sheltered it from winds blowing from that direction, but was exposed to the north and north-west winds. The house itself stood within a stone's throw of the shore, in the middle of a clearing of about six acres. It was a log house, of the rudest kind, as Joe thought it very likely he might burn it up before he got done setting fires. Rude as was its appearance, the whole scene presented to the eye an aspect of comfort and plenty. The burn had a noble log fence around it; a magnificent piece of corn completely surrounded the house and log

barn, growing to the very threshold, leaving only a footpath by which to reach the house; on the other side, the lot had been sown with wheat, which was now cut, and large stooks were scattered over the field.

As the boys approached, they paused in admiration.

"I have seen a good many pieces of corn planted on a burn, but I never saw anything that would begin with that."

"Look at the grain," said Charlie, "don't that look rich? Well, they'll have enough to eat, that's certain."

Entering the house, they found Mrs. Griffin at the loom, weaving, and received a most cordial welcome. The house had but two rooms, but the roof being sharp, and the house large on the ground, there was room to put beds in the garret. Skeins of linen and woollen yarn, hanging up all around the room, attested Sally's capabilities.

"Where is Joe?" asked Charlie.

"In the woods, on the back end of the lot, falling trees. He goes into the woods as soon as he can see, and stays as long as he can see."

“He must make an awful hole in the woods in a week,” said John.

“Have you got any pasture?”

“No; but the cow does first-rate on browse, and what grass grows on open spots in the woods. Now Joe gives her cornstalks, she does better than our cows ever did at home in the best pasture.”

“Have you got a pig?” asked Charlie.

“Yes, a real nice one. Come, go look at him. We’ve had milk enough for him till lately. Now Joe has to buy potatoes for him; but we shall have corn enough of our own by and by.”

“That you will,” said John. “I don’t see how you get your cow into the barn. You can’t drive her through this cornfield; it’s all around the barn.”

“We don’t. I go out in the woods to milk. We’ve got a cow-yard there; and when it rains Joe milks.”

“You have real nice times — don’t you, Sally?”

“I guess we do, John. We work hard, but we are well and strong: work don’t hurt us, and we’ve enough to eat. Our place is paid for. There ain’t a man in the world has a right to ask Joe for a dollar, and there never was a woman had a *better* husband. We are just as happy as the days are long.”

After seeing the pig and hens, the boys said they must go and find Joe.

“Well, go right to the end of the corn, and you’ll hear his axe. Do you like coot stew, boys?”

“Don’t we!” said Charlie; “and haven’t had one since we left home.”

“Then you shall have one for supper. Joe shot some coots this morning.”

The boys proceeded through the woods, guided by the sound of the axe, and soon perceived their friend through the trees busily at work. Creeping cautiously on their hands and knees, they succeeded in approaching within a stone’s throw, and concealing themselves behind the roots of an up-turned tree, observed his movements. For a long distance in front of him were trees cut partly through, the white chips covering the ground all around their roots. He was now at work upon an enormous red oak, with long, branching limbs. Having finished his scarf on the side next to some partially cut trees, and which had taken the tree nearly off, he wiped the sweat from his brow, and with an upward glance at the sun, leaned upon his axe-handle.

It was evident to the boys that Joe had been

chopping trees partly off during the whole afternoon, and was about to fall the monster oak on them, in order to make a drive; and as he knew by the sun it was not far from supper-time, this was the last he intended to cut before supper. He had evidently done a hard day's work. The sweat was dropping from his nose, and his clothes were saturated. Nevertheless, a smile passed over his features, as he stood with a foot on one of the great spur roots of his victim, leaning forward upon the axe-handle, evidently in a very happy frame of mind.

"He's thinking about that piece of corn," whispered Charlie, "and what a nice farm he'll have when he gets these trees out of the way."

"Didn't you see him looking at the sun? He's glad it's most supper-time, when he can see Sally."

Joe now resumed his work, and taking hold of the end of his axe-handle with both hands, delivered long, swinging blows, with the precision and rapidity of some engine, while the great chips fell from the scarf, and accumulated in a pile around the roots.

"I told you he wanted to see Sally. Only see that axe go in! How true he strikes, and what a long-winded creature he is!"

“Won’t that make a smashing when it falls? Such a big tree, and such long limbs! There it goes! I can see the top quiver!”

Crack! snap! Joe ceased to strike as the enormous bulk tottered for a moment in the air, then falling upon the trees adjoining, which were cut nearly off, bore them down in an instant, these in their turn falling upon others. Beneath this tremendous aggregate of forces, the forest fell with a roar and crash, as though uprooted by a whirlwind, the air was filled with branches and leaves, and when the tumult had subsided, a long, broad path was cut through the dense forest, with here and there a mutilated stub standing upright amid the desolation. As the last tree touched the earth, a loud cheer, mingled with the sound of cracking timber and rending branches. Turning suddenly around, Joe confronted John and Charlie.

“How are you, old slayer of trees?” cried Charlie.

“First-rate, my little boat-builder,” replied Joe, taking both his hands; “and how are you, John?”

“Well and hearty.”

“I’m right glad to see you, boys, and take it

real kind in you to come clear up here to visit me. When did you get home?"

"Last week," said Charlie. "We came over to Uncle Isaac's, and from there here. You've got a real nice place, Joe. How much land have you?"

"Two hundred acres. It is well watered and timbered. There's pine on the back part, as there is on your'n, and all these lots. Did you see my corn?"

"Yes, we've been to the house, and came right through it. I never saw such corn before!" said John.

"That's what everybody says, and the wheat is as good as the corn. If the frost holds off, and the bears don't eat it up, I shall have a lot of corn; but right here in the woods the frost is apt to strike early."

"Been cutting up any shines lately, Joe?" asked John.

"Not a shine. I'm an old, steady, married man."

The horn was now heard.

"Come, boys, there's supper."

It was only five o'clock. It was the farmers' custom in those days to have supper at five or half past, and then work till night. Sally had provided



a bountiful supper—a coot stew, flapjacks, with maple sirup and custards.

“Did you make this sirup, Joe?” asked Charlie.

“Yes, or rather, Sally did, and sugar enough to last a year. I tapped the trees, and fixed a kettle in the woods, and she made it while I was clearing land long before the house was built. She said if I was going to have corn to begin with, she would have sugar, and you see she’s got it.”

## CHAPTER IX.

## HOW JOE ENTERTAINED HIS GUESTS.

AFTER supper the boys prepared to take leave.

“Go!” cried Joe; “you ain’t a going to do any such thing. You’re going to stay a week. What did you come for—just to aggravate a fellow? It is like showing a horse an ear of corn out of the garret window.”

“But we want to go and see Flour, and Fred, and lots of folks,” said John.

“Flour’s over to Wiscasset: besides, you mustn’t call him Flour; he’s Peterson, now.”

“But you want to be clearing land, and we shall only hinder you.”

“I tell you you *can’t*, nor *shan’t* go; so say no more about it. I want you to help me make a bear-trap to-night, and shoot some pigeons in the morning on the stubble.”

“Then I’m sure I shan’t stir a step,” cried Charlie.

“Nor I, either,” said John.

“I thought I should bring you to your senses. Have you seen the pig?”

“Yes; he’s a beauty!”

“Well, you haven’t seen the garden.”

“A garden on a burn! Who ever heard of such a thing?” said Charlie.

“You don’t know everything, if you have been to Portland, and worked in a ship-yard. Come ’long o’ me.”

He led them to the south side of the log barn, and there they beheld a sight that astonished them not a little. Right among the stumps were growing, in the greatest imaginable luxuriance, beans, peas (second crop), squashes, cucumbers, potatoes, cabbages, watermelons, and flat-turnips. The peas and squash-vines had completely covered the stumps, and large squashes were hanging from them, and lying between the great forked roots of the trees in all directions.

“Didn’t take many sticks for the peas,” said Joe, “stumps are so thick. What do you think of that for a cowcumber?” pointing to a very large one. “Just see the watermillions!” taking up one as large as a large pumpkin. “All this kind of truck grows first-rate on a burn — squashes, turnips, peas, and especially watermillions. But come, if

we are going to set that bear-trap, it's time we were at it."

When they arrived at the place Joe had selected, he cut a large log, three feet in diameter and about fifteen feet long, rolled another of the same length and size on top of it, then set two large stakes at each end where the two logs were to touch each other, driving them down with his axe. These were to keep the top log from rolling off the under one. They now lifted the top log up. It was as much as the three could lift, and John held it with a handspike, while Joe and Charlie set the trap, which was done in this manner: A round stick was laid across the bottom log, and a sharpened stake set under the upper one, the end of it resting on this round stick, and the bait fastened to the round stick. The moment the bear pulled the bait towards him, it caused the round stick to roll, and down came the great log on his head.

"I could have set it more ticklish," said Joe, "but I was afraid the wind would spring it; and these plaguy coons, that eat whatever a bear eats, will do it."

It is evident, that as the trap is now arranged, the bear might approach on the side, pull the bait out, and spring the trap without being caught.

In order to prevent this, a row of strong stakes is set in the ground on the side where the bait is, forming a pen enclosing the bait placed upon the end of the round stick, which projects into the pen; thus the bear, in order to reach the bait, must crawl between and across the logs, and by pulling the bait, brings down the top log upon him.

“Charlie, I’ve forgot the bait,” said Joe. “Run up to the house, and ask Sally to give you the quarter of lamb Uncle Isaac gave me. Don’t you think the wolves killed ten sheep last night for him and the Pettigrews!”

“How did they get at them?”

“There hadn’t been any wolves round for some time, and they left them out of the fold. Uncle Isaac sent the meat of one to me.”

It may be well to inform our readers that in those days sheep were folded every night, to protect them from the wolves. A log pen was built on a piece of land where some one of the neighbors intended to plant corn the next year, and a number of flocks of sheep were driven in every night. After a while the pen was moved to another spot, and the land was thus thoroughly enriched.

The next year, the sheep were folded upon an-

other person's land. Sometimes, as in the present instance, through neglect, or not being able to find them, they were left out, and fell a prey to the wolves, who not only killed what sheep they wanted to eat, but would bite the throats and suck the blood of all they could get at.

When Charlie came with the meat, Joe fastened it to the round stick, taking several turns with the rope around the stick, in order that it might roll when the bear pulled the meat towards him.

"Now," said Joe, "all that's wanting is the bear, and there's just time enough before dark to set a spring-gun. Did you know I've got Ben's big gun over here?"

"No."

"I have. He said I might have it a while if I would make a handsome stock to it. It's just the thing for bears. Come, go with me and get it, right in my shop. You haven't seen my workshop yet."

"Have you got a work-shop?"

"To be sure I have. Not quite so nice as yours on the island, but it answers the purpose very well."

Joe led the way to the house. On the side of it he had built a lean-to of logs, quite large, and in it a stone fireplace, with a chimney of sticks of

wood, filled in with clay; but he had an excellent set of tools, of the kind used in that day, and a bench. Here Joe worked for others, not for himself, and made yokes, harrows, ploughs, and other utensils for his neighbors, who did not possess the tools, or the gift to use them, and received his pay in labor or provisions, and a little money.

In his proceedings was realized the proverb, "The shoemaker's wife and the blacksmith's mare always go bare;" for while he made all kinds of conveniences for others, he had none for himself, but intended to have them all by and by, when the land was cleared, the place stocked, and he built a frame house.

"Look here, Charlie," said Joe, showing him a piece of wild cherry-tree wood, in which the veins were very much diversified, "won't that be handsome when it is worked off and polished? I mean to make a stock of that for the old gun, that will come to a fellow's face like a duck's bill in the mud; but the old one is just as good for me to knock round in the dirt, and set for bears."

Joe threw the gun on his shoulder, and they started for the cornfield. He had planted the corn somewhat regularly in rows, though they were often broken by stumps.

He showed the boys a gap in the fence, where a bear had come in a few nights before.

“Why don’t you stop it up?” asked Charlie.

“What would be the use of that? You can’t fence against a bear. You might as well fence against a cat. Besides, when a bear has come into a field once, he will most always take the same road next time, and I’m going to plant my battery on that calculation.”

It so happened that the gap in the fence through which the bear had made his entrance on previous nights ranged between two rows of corn. In the centre, between these rows, Joe drove two stout stakes into the ground, and splitting their ends with the axe, forced the gun, heavily loaded with ball and shot, into the splits, the muzzle directed towards the gap in the fence. At the breech of the gun, near to, and a little behind the trigger, he placed a crotch, in which he laid a stick, one end of it resting in the ground before the trigger, to the other end he fastened a stout cod-line, thus forming a lever purchase. This line was conducted by crotches driven into the ground directly in front of the gun, then ran across the row back again, and was fastened to the stake which supported the muzzle of the gun. If the bear trod



upon or leaned against this line, he would discharge the piece, shoot himself, and thus his blood be upon his own head. If he came through the gap, or along between the rows, he could not well help stepping on the line.

“There ain’t much likelihood of shooting a bear with a spring-gun,” said Joe, when he had made his preparations. “They have got to come right before it. If he don’t come through this gap to-morrow night, I’ll put some bait before the gun to tole him.”

They now returned to the house.

“It must be nice to have bears!” said Charlie. “What a good time I might have if I was on my place, making traps, setting guns, and hunting!”

“It ain’t so very nice,” said Joe, “to work hard, and raise a piece of corn, then just as it is in the milk, and growing as fast as it can, have a whole army of bears and coons waiting to destroy it the moment you shut your eyes.”

The boys, when they retired, thought they should certainly hear the gun if it went off in the night; but instead of this, they slept so soundly they did not wake till Joe called at sunrise.

“Has the gun gone off?” cried Charlie, almost before his eyes were open.

“Don’t know. Didn’t hear it. Didn’t calculate to.”

“Is there any bear in the trap?” cried John.

“Haven’t been to see.”

The boys were quickly dressed, and all three were on their way to the cornfield.

“It’s sprung! Hurrah! The trap’s sprung!” shouted Charlie, standing on tiptoe, and looking ahead.

The boys broke into a run, leaving Joe, more cool and probably less sanguine, to follow at his leisure. When at length he reached the spot, he found them standing with blank faces before the trap, in which was the head and shoulders of a coon, the remaining portion of the body having been eaten off.

“You mean, miserable little rat you!” exclaimed Charlie. “Nobody wanted you. What business had you to get into a bear-trap?”

“What do you suppose eat the coon?” asked John. “Foxes?”

“Foxes? no,” replied Joe. “A bear. Look at that corn,” pointing to a place where the bear, after eating the corn, had broken down the stalks, eaten some ears, bitten others, and apparently lain down and wallowed.

“Look there,” said Charlie, taking up a stalk of corn that was bloody; “that was the first one he bit, and some of the coon’s blood is on it.”

“He hasn’t done much hurt,” said Joe; “didn’t get in till most morning, or he would have done more; he’ll be sure to come back again, as he got part of a bellyful, and didn’t get enough.”

They now went to the place where they had set the gun.

“It’s gone,” screamed the boys, who had gone ahead; “there’s no gun here.”

When Joe came to the place, he found the gun gone, the stakes that had held it upset, the crotches torn from the ground, and the cod-line wound around the hills of corn, which was trampled down in all directions.

“Here’s the gun,” cried John; “it’s gone off.”

“Here’s blood,” said Charlie, who had gone to the gap in the fence; “here’s blood all over this log, where he bled getting over.”

“Look here,” said John, holding up the gun; “only look at the stock.”

“That’s where he bit it,” said Joe; “he was mad, and so he bit the thing that hurt him.”

"I don't blame him," said Charlie, "if he got all that buck shot and those balls in him."

"I guess he's hurt bad; he's got some of 'em in him."

"Let's go right after him this minute: we'll have him."

"Not so fast, my boy; we'll have some breakfast first; we may have to follow him miles."

Breakfast was soon despatched. Joe loaded up the big gun, gave John his own rifle, and Charlie an old Queen's arm that belonged to Henry.

"There's been two of 'em in the corn, I know as well as I want to," said Joe. They were able to track him by the blood and a peculiar mark like a scratch on the leaves, and wherever the ground was soft.

"He must have one leg broke or hurt," said Joe: "see there! every little while he drags it."

Thus they followed for hours, sometimes losing the track, and then, after a long search, finding it again, which consumed a great deal of time. The trail led them in the direction of Charlie's place.

"It's one of your bears, Charlie; they are breachy. I wish you would keep them at home out of my corn."

"You must put them in pound, Joe."

Pursuing till they came to the brook, they lost the track altogether. Thinking he might have gone into the brook, they followed along the banks on each side to the pond, hoping to regain his track when he left the water, but without success. They were now hungry and discouraged, — it was the middle of the afternoon, — and were about to abandon the search and return, but sat down under a short, butted, scrubby hemlock to rest and consult.

"If we only had Tige," said John, "he would take us right to him."

For the last hour they had seen no blood, and Joe reckoned that the blood had clotted in the wounds, or he had stuffed them with moss.

"We shall have to give him up; he's got into his den," said Joe.

"Why couldn't we go home and get Tige on the track, and start, early in the morning?"

"While they were conversing, a drop of blood fell on the back of Charlie's hand. Looking up, he saw the bear in the tree right over his head.

Worn out with fatigue and loss of blood, and unable to reach his den, with the last efforts of remaining strength he had crawled up the tree,

with the design of ascending to the thick top, and escaping the notice of his pursuers; but having tangled the cod-line, to which the stake which supported the muzzle of the gun was attached, round one of his hind legs, he had dragged it after him, and catching it in the lower limbs, he, being exhausted, was brought to an anchor. The exertion of climbing the tree had made the wound bleed afresh.

“Good afternoon, friend,” said Joe, who was greatly elated at this unlooked-for success; “see what you did,”—holding up the long gun, and showing the bear the marks of his own teeth on the stock. “Who do you think is to pay for that, eh? Don’t you wish you’d kept out of my corn?”

“See how guilty he looks,” said John, pointing to the creature, who lay with his fore paws on a large branch, gravely regarding his foes with the stoicism of an Indian at the stake.

“Come, boys, which of you want to shoot him?”

They both were silent.

“John does,” said Charlie, at length.

“Charlie does,” replied John.

“Both of you do. Well, both of you fire at him.”



THE LAST OF THE BEAR. — Page 101.





Scarcely were the words uttered when their guns made a common report, and the bear tumbled to the ground perfectly dead.

“Ain’t you glad you didn’t go home yesterday?”

“Guess we are.”

“Ain’t a bit hungry, nor tired, now?”

“Not a bit.”

“It’s nearer five o’clock than four, and that bear must be got home and dressed to-night. I thought his leg was broken, but it was that stake dragging that made the trail, and helped greatly to tire him.”

Joe tied his legs together with the cod-line, and finding a dead spruce, they broke it down, and thrust it between his legs; Joe taking one end on his shoulders and the boys the other, they carried the carcass to the shore.

“This is a big one,” said Joe, drawing a long breath: he weighs every bit of three hundred. Well, I’ve kept him well; he’s had all the corn he’s wanted, and the best of corn too; and there’s been any quantity of blueberries this year. Now let us take a drink at Cross-root Spring, leave our guns here, go home and get supper, then take the boat, come up and get the bear.”

"We are going to call it Quicksilver Spring now," said Charlie: "you know what happened here."

"Well, Quicksilver Spring, then."

"It was a noble day's work Uncle Isaac did that day."

"He saved that young man; but we are not a going to have to fight the battle, a handful of us, with liquor much longer."

"Why not?"

"Because people that have got larning, and that are looked up to, are beginning to take it up. James Welch sent a newspaper to Uncle Isaac that has printed what Dr. Franklin said about it long ago; and there's a long piece that the College of Doctors in Philadelphia sent to Congress, about it, saying something ought to be done; that rum was ruining the country, and upsetting all we had done in getting our liberty: the paper's at the house; you can read it. Now, when the papers take anything up, it's a sartain sign that there are a good many people thinking about those matters, and want to hear about them; they never bark till the deer's afoot; it will spread just like ile when you drop it on the water to spear a flounder."

Thus beguiling the rough journey through the forest, they arrived home just before sundown.

“Now, boys, while Sally’s putting supper on the table, we’ll just set the trap again.”

After resting a while, and eating a substantial meal, having eaten nothing since six o’clock that morning, they took the boat, and being favored with a fair wind and tide, sailed leisurely up the bay under a bright starlight.

“We’ve got the night before us,” said Joe, “so needn’t hurry.”

“This is easier than walking,” said Charlie; “the tide will turn by the time we get there, and if we do have to beat or row back, we shall have a fair tide.”

They were favored in this respect; for by the time they had placed the bear in the boat, and were ready to start, it fell calm, and they rowed leisurely home with the tide.

It was much nearer morning than midnight, when, having dressed the animal and hung him up in the barn floor, they went to bed.

## CHAPTER X.

## TRAPPING AND NETTING.

IT was eight o'clock when the boys got up the next morning. Joe was stretching the skin on the barn door, and his wife frying bear's steaks for breakfast. They had eaten but two meals the day before, and though the last was a very hearty one, yet, as they had been at work out of door, the greater part of the night, they awoke hungry. The smell of the meat was so savory, and it looked so tempting, as Sally piled up the large slices on the plate, and prepared to place them on the table, that, resisting the impulse to go out of doors, the boys sat down to await breakfast, which they saw was nearly ready.

"Where is Joe?" inquired John.

"Stretching the bear's skin."

"Has he been to the trap?"

"I don't know."

Charlie shoved back the sliding shutter of the window that commanded a view of the barn (there

was but one glazed window in the house ; the others were furnished with wooden shutters, in two of which there were diamond-shaped holes cut, and small squares of glass set in them), where Joe was at work.

“Joe!”

No reply.

“Joe!”

Joe kept on driving the nails into the edges of the hide.

“Jo-o-o-o!”

“Well.”

“Have you been to the bear-trap?”

“Been *where*?”

“Why, to the trap, to see if it was sprung.”

“How could I go, when I had this hide to take care of?”

“Will you say you haven’t?”

“Guess not.”

“Is there anything in it?” cried Charlie, stirred up by the evasive answers he received.

“How you do like to ask questions!”

“A bear! a bear!” roared Charlie, jumping out of the window and running full speed for the trap, with John at his heels. When they arrived at the spot, the trap was sprung, sure enough, and

in it was a bear of the largest size, with his body across the lower log, the upper on his back, and his hinder parts on the ground.

“Ain’t he a big one!” said John: “see what handsome fur; a real jet black,” — passing his hand along his back; “they are not all so black; some of ’em are kind of brown and faded out.”

“See what claws!” said Charlie, taking up one of his fore paws and spreading apart the toes with his fingers.

“They are awful strong,” said John: “Uncle Isaac says they will stave the head of a barrel of molasses in with blows of their paws, and that he has seen ’em, when hunting after bugs and wood-worms in old rotten logs, strike with their paws, and split them right open.”

The horn now sounded for breakfast.

“How much is that bear-skin worth, Joe?” asked Charlie.

“About six dollars; perhaps more.”

“Then you’ll get some pay for your corn.”

“Yes; and then the meat is good.”

“And the fat is first rate to have in the house; it’s as good as lard,” said Sally.

“The worst of it is,” said Joe, “we have it all at once; now we’ve got the meat of two bears, and it

will spoil before we can eat half of it; then there are sea-fowl, lobsters, and pigeons, so that everything comes together. We ought to give some of this meat to the neighbors: bears ain't so plenty down to the village as they are up here in the woods."

"I'll go over to Uncle Isaac's," said Sally, "and tell him he can send word to some of the neighbors, and to your father's folks, to come and get some."

"When the boys go home I will take them down to Captain Rhines's in the boat, and carry some meat to him and Ben."

"We'll help you dress the bear, Joe, and then we must go," said Charlie: "we can't stay any longer; we should like to; we've had the greatest time that ever was, but we must go now."

"Don't want to hear any such talk as that; it's no kind of use to talk that way here; can't spare you; we've got just as much to do to-day as we can spring to, then fix the pigeon-bed, set the net, make a cage to put them in, dress this bear, and set the dead-fall for another."

"A pigeon-net? What is that?"

"Why, Charlie," said John, "don't you know what a pigeon-net is?"

"No. I thought they shot 'em."

"How should he know?" said Joe.

"Why, Charlie, they catch them by hundreds in nets."

"Do?"

"Yes, and put them in a cage."

"And put them in a cage?"

"Yes, they put them in a cage, or some place, and keep them, and fat them."

"Don't the net kill 'em?"

"No. Don't hurt 'em one mite."

"Then I shan't go, if all that's going on."

"No sooner was breakfast over, and the bear dressed, than Joe brought out his net. It was fifteen feet in length by ten in width.

"Who made this net?" asked Charlie.

"Sally: she spun all the twine on the flax wheel, and netted it."

Taking the net, they went on to the wheat stubble. Near the woods was a place where there had been an opening when the land was in forest; consequently, when the fire had burned off the moss and leaves (duff, as Joe called it), the ground was mellow and free from roots. A portion of this he had dug up, carried away all the sticks and stones, raked it as smooth as a garden bed, and flung wheat on it.



Early in the morning and towards night the wild pigeons would come, light on the trees, look at the grain a while, then fly down and eat. He had baited the pigeons thus for several days, till they had become used to the spot, and quite tame : now he prepared to net them.

In the first place, they set down, at each corner of the bed (which was a little larger than the net), pieces of plank with their edges directed across the bed, about a foot above the surface of the ground : in the sides of two of them cut slots, on the inside of one and the outside of the other, that is, the corner ones ; on the longest side, at the distance of about twelve feet from the planks and on the opposite side from the posts in which the slots are cut, they put down, three feet into the ground, and on a line with them, two tough green beech saplings, three inches through at the butt, and six feet in height. To the top of these posts he fastened a strong rope forty feet long, and the edge of the net to this rope. The lower edge of the net was fastened to the ground by little crotches, on the opposite side from the high posts, and merely slack enough left of the rope to admit of taking the net and rope across, and permitting the net to lie nicely folded in as compact a form as possible on

the ground along the edge of the bed. He then took two strips of stiff, hard wood board, an inch and a quarter thick and two inches wide, with a dove-tail notch in one end to hold the rope; one end of these he set against the plank posts, which were well over towards the middle of the bed on the side the log posts stood, put the notched end against the bight of the rope to which the net was fastened, and, pressing down with all his might, sprung the stiff beech posts enough to force the sticks (flyers he called them), with the rope attached to them, into the slots in the plank posts. The net, which lay nicely folded along the edge of the bed, was then covered over with earth; long limbs, thickly covered with leaves, were now cut and set up, forming a booth around one of the high posts at one end, bringing the line to which the flyers were fastened into the booth, thus enabling the hunter concealed there, at one twitch, to pull the flyers, which held the net down, out of the slots, when the tremendous spring of the beech poles would fling the net over the bed in an instant.

Wheat was now strown in a long row the whole length of the bed, and nearest to the side on which the net was folded, that the pigeons, when they came on, might be sure to be completely envel-

oped, being nearer the centre of the net. Some saplings were set in hollow stumps and in the ground to form lighting places, as pigeons like to have a chance to reconnoitre before flying down.

Joe had not intended to set the net so soon, but to have built the booth, set up the poles, and put on the rope, in order that the pigeons might get accustomed to the sight of these objects; but he had hurried up matters to keep the boys there and gratify them.

“We won’t spring it to-night, boys, but let them come here, get their supper, and see all these fixings. They will come and light on the trees, look round, see the grain; some of them will come to the bed, eat a little, and make up their minds that all is right. To-night we’ll put on fresh grain, and in the morning make a real haul.”

The forenoon was fully occupied with the bear and the pigeon-bed. In the afternoon they went to work to make a cage to keep them. They made it of logs, covering the top with small poles, that they might have plenty of light and air, put in roosts, and made a trough for water.

The cage, instead of being square, was made in the shape of a blunt wedge, and the apex lined with a net, so that they could be driven into the

narrow part into the net, and caught without difficulty.

At night they visited the bed, found the pigeons had been there, and having put on fresh grain, went home, and, being weary from the work of the previous night, retired early, with sanguine expectations for the morrow.

Joe called them before the dawn of day, and they were all three soon secreted in the booth. As the day broke, they began to hear a flapping of wings. First came three or four, then more, till long before sunrise the saplings, trees in the woods, and even the rope that ran from the spring-pole to the ground, were all covered with them.

Charlie was quivering with excitement. He had never seen anything like it in his life, and could scarcely contain himself as he watched them through the network of branches. There they sat, arching their necks, turning their heads first to one side and then to the other. At length one flew down to the grain, instantly followed by others; and then the whole flock came down, crowding together, and eating with the utmost voracity. As they were coming to the place, Charlie had entreated Joe to let him spring the net, and now stood with his hand on the rope;

but when the crisis came, he felt that there was too much at stake, and made a sign to Joe. He gave a sudden jerk; whiz! went the rope. The fliers were flung twenty feet in the air, the whole front of the booth fell over, flung off by the rope, and such a fluttering of wings you never heard!

“O, my soul!” exclaimed Charlie. “There, there, I’ve lived long enough! Only see the— see the necks!”

“There’s forty dozen if there’s one,” said Joe.

“That’s what I call a haul,” said John.

“But,” said Charlie, “only see how pert they look, and happy, too! I thought it was going to hurt or kill some of them.”

When the net goes over the pigeons, they will stick up their necks through the meshes. It was this sight, so singular to one unaccustomed to it, that excited the wonder and prompted the exclamation of Charlie.

“I have made up my mind to one thing,” he continued. “I *will not* go back to Portland if I can get my living here.”

“Nor I, either,” said John.

“Glad you’ve both got so much sense. What ails you to get your living? I’ll give both of you your board and clothes to come and work for me.”

“Much obliged, but we want to do a little more than that.”

“Well, haven’t you got a good farm, all paid for, or something to make one of? Ain’t you a boat-builder? Ain’t John a blacksmith?”

“If anybody was living here,” said John, “they could put in and do a lot of work, then go off and hunt, have a grand time, get straightened out, the kinks taken out of them, and then come back and work all the better.”

“Yes,” replied Charlie; “and it pays to net pigeons, kill bears and coons, and get the flesh to eat; also sea-fowl, seals, and deer, and have the feathers and skins to sell. But in Portland, if you’re out of work, all you can do is to sit on the anvil, or stand in the sun, leaning against an upright in the ship-yard, chewing chips, making up sour faces, and saying, ‘O, I wish somebody would give me a job! some farmer lose his axe and want another, or some ship would get cast away, so I could build one.’ I tell you, I won’t go back. The more I think of it, the more I don’t want to.”

“On the strength of that,” said Joe, “kill half a dozen of these pigeons, and we’ll go home and get some baskets to take the rest to the cage.”

Our readers know that Charlie was exceedingly fond, not only of the soil, but of trees and plants of all kinds. Born and reared in early life in a land where trees are comparatively rare, and prized accordingly, he was not at all pleased with the wholesale destruction Joe had made with axe and firebrand. Joe, on the other hand, possessed the true spirit of a pioneer, and had been educated to consider trees as natural enemies, and that a person's pluck was to be measured by the number he could destroy.

"Joe," said Charlie, "why didn't you save some of those splendid great maples, ash, and birches to shade your homestead?"

"*Save 'em!* I've had trouble enough to get rid of 'em. I'd rather have corn and wheat."

"But after you get all this land into grass, and a frame house built, then you'll wish you had, and go to setting them out; and by the time they're grown you'll be an old man. Don't you think the trees around our brook, and before Captain Rhines's house, look handsome?"

"Yes," said his wife, "I'm sure I do; they look beautiful. There's one tree I don't believe Captain Rhines would sell for a hundred dollars."

"You can't save 'em. You got to put the fire in

to clear your lands, and do it when it's dry, or you can't get a good burn; and if you leave any trees, the fire will roast the roots and kill 'em. Those trees of Captain Rhines's wasn't *saved*. His father set them out, and I've heard Uncle Isaac say people thought he was in his dotage for doing it."

"They don't think so now. I don't see why you can't pull the brush and other trees away from their roots."

"I tell you, you can't; for in a dry time the old leaves, moss, and the whole top of the ground will burn, or at any rate be hot enough to scald and kill the roots."

"I don't believe you ever tried very hard to save a tree, Joe."

"I don't care. I saw Seth Warren try to save some sugar maples, and he couldn't."

"Well, if ever I build a house on my place, I'll save some, and a good many, too; see if I don't."

"We shall see. When is that happy time coming?"

"I don't know, but hope it will be before you kill all the bears."

"You and I ain't much alike. You want to save all the bears and trees, and I want to use up both."



“Joe, there’s one thing I wish you’d do for me.”

“What is that?”

“If you ever come across a little cub, save it for me, or a pair if you can.”

“You going to stock Elm Island with bears?”

“I would if I could. Joe, what’s the reason pigeons don’t come to Elm Island? Only once in a while half a dozen light as they go over.”

“’Cause there’s nothing for them to eat there. They live on what bears do — acorns, beech-nuts, and blueberries; but on your place there’s enough for both. Come, hurry up your cakes, and get on to it, and we’ll hunt in company.”

In the afternoon Joe carried the boys down to Captain Rhines’s in the boat, with pigeons and bear’s meat enough for his family and Ben’s. After meeting Sunday, Charlie returned to the island.

## CHAPTER XI.

## MOST IMPORTANT DECISIONS.

ONE would naturally suppose that Charlie, returning to the quiet of Elm Island after the exciting week he had passed, would have experienced at least a transient feeling of loneliness; but he manifested no such sentiment, and went to work at his cart-wheels with the greatest assiduity and evident enjoyment.

In the course of the week he was most agreeably surprised by a visit from John and Fred, bringing Isaac Murch, Jr., with them, now a tall, strong young man, swarthy from long exposure to the East India suns and sea-winds, bearing a very strong resemblance to his uncle, with intelligence and energy in every feature.

It was past the middle of the afternoon when the boys arrived at the island. After Isaac had spent some time with Ben and Sally, the four friends strolled up to the old maple. They told Isaac the history of the holes bored in it, and of all

that had transpired in respect to temperance while he had been away, and then listened with great interest to an account of his life at sea, and the scenes he had witnessed in the East. John at length inquired if he intended to continue in the same employ; to which he replied that he did not.

“I see no prospect,” said he, “of being anything more than mate. Mr. Welch has a great many relatives who follow the sea, and so have the captains who have long sailed in his employ, and are at the same time owners in the vessels they go in. Captain Radford, I’m with, is an old man. If there was nobody in the way, he would give me the vessel in a year or two, for he wants to retire. But he has a son who is going second mate this voyage. The next voyage, or the next after, he’ll put him in captain over my head if I am willing to remain; and so it is all through. Now, if I had a vessel,—any kind of a thing, if it was like the *Ark*,—to get a cargo of spars to Europe, or lumber, spars, and other truck to the West Indies, I could pay for it, and build a better one in a short time; with good luck, make more in one year than I can going mate in five.”

“I believe that,” said John; “for I know by what I’ve heard captains in Portland say, and

what Mr. Starrett, that I learned my trade of, who is concerned in several of these lumber vessels, has told me.”

“Some of those Portland captains have coined money; but it is a good deal as you happen to hit. If you get to a West India port when the market is empty, you get your own price; if not, you won’t make much.”

“Only see,” said Fred, “what Captain Rhines did in the Ark!”

“That was an exception. He arrived off the harbor of Havana in a peculiar time. Lumber was scarce, they had no beef for their slavers, they gave him a license to trade, and the captain-general remitted the duties. He saved by that remission more than two thousand five hundred dollars. The Federal Constitution was not formed then, and he had no duties to pay in Boston. However, I’m going to stick where I am this voyage, and perhaps another, till I get money enough to take a part of some kind of craft, if it’s only a pinkie, go round among the neighbors, scare up owners, and try my luck. I’d rather be a king among hogs than a hog among kings. I’d rather be skipper of a chebacco boat than mate of a ship, — to sail the vessel, take all the responsibility,

endure all the anxiety for somebody's son or nephew, who runs away with all the credit, and the money to boot, and don't know how to knot a rope-yarn, or handle a ship in a sea-way."

There was now a pause in the conversation, when Charlie, who, though an attentive listener, had not uttered a word, said, speaking deliberately, "We will build you a vessel, Isaac."

"*We!*" replied Isaac in astonishment. "Who's *we?*"

"We three sitting here."

"Three *boys* build a vessel!"

"We may be boys, but we are all able to do a *man's* work. I think, as you say you are in no hurry, give us time, we could build a cheap vessel, that would be strong and serviceable to carry heavy cargoes for a few voyages, which you say is all you want."

"I think as much," said Fred. "We three boys have always been together, and have undertaken several things, and have never yet failed to accomplish what we have attempted."

"But you never undertook anything like this, or to be compared with it. Building a vessel is quite another matter from making *baskets*."

The reader will bear in mind that Isaac had

been away during the period in which the boys had developed most rapidly, and was not so well aware of what they might be expected to accomplish as he otherwise would have been.

“But,” asked Isaac, “where are the carpenters coming from? There are none here but Yelf and Joe Griffin, and neither of them have ever been master workmen. You must go to Portland or Wiscasset for a master workman and blacksmith; and where is the money to pay them, fit up a yard, build a blacksmith’s shop, buy tools and iron?”

“Charlie,” replied John, “can be master workman.”

“John,” said Fred, “can do the iron-work.”

He then told Isaac of their capabilities, and what they had done since he had been gone, which greatly astonished him, and presented the subject under discussion in a very different light, especially when Charlie told him that he could cut the timber entirely on his own land, the spars, and also spars and lumber to load her.

“But,” said Isaac, “you must have carpenters. You can’t build her alone.”

“To build a vessel in the manner we shall build one, we don’t need but three good carpenters, and

there are plenty of men round here that can hew, bore, drive bolts, and saw with a whip-saw. Yelf is a capital man with an adze, and so is Ralph Chase. They can do all the dubbing."

"My uncle can make the spars," said Isaac.

"Peterson," said John, "can calk and rig her, and father and Ben can make the sails."

"The next question," said Charlie, "is, What kind of a vessel do you want?"

"I want her built to lug a load and to steer well. Speed is no object to what the carrying part is. The voyages will be short, and wages and provisions are not high in comparison with the value of cargoes. I don't want one cent laid out for looks. We must go on the principle of the man who goes on to new land. He lives in a log cabin, built as cheap as possible, because he expects to have a better one."

"But you wouldn't have her look too bad," said Charlie.

"That's just the way I want her to look. All I'm afraid of is, you can't make her look bad enough. I want a sloop, with good spars, rigging, cables, and anchors."

"What makes you want a sloop?"

"Because she is cheaper rigged and handled."

“How large?”

“Two hundred tons.”

At this all the boys expressed their astonishment.

“A sloop of two hundred tons! Why, who ever heard of such a thing!” said Charlie. “The most of brigs are not more than that, many less. I never saw a sloop bigger than eighty-five tons.”

“I saw one last week, in Boston, that had just arrived from Liverpool with a load of salt, that was one hundred and fifteen. If you want to carry timber, you must have some bigness, and if spars, some length.”

“But what an awful mainsail! How could you ever handle it?”

“I’ll take care of that part of it. Shorten the mast, and put a good part of the canvas into a topsail, top-gallant sail, and jibs.”

“I never saw a sloop with a topsail,” said Fred.

“They are common enough,” said Isaac, “though not round here.”

“Now,” said Charlie, “it is best to have a fair understanding. I think we can build this vessel, although you want a larger one than I had expected. We are used to working together, are of one mind, and, as Fred says, never undertook to



do anything we didn't accomplish; but it will be a hard, trying thing, and we may have to leave off two or three times, and go to work at something else to earn money to go on again."

"I will go mate till you get her done, no matter how long it is. I shall be contented if I have something to look forward to."

"I suppose," said Fred, "Captain Rhines or Mr. Ben would help us out if we got stuck."

"Not with my consent," said John. "If we've got to fall back on the old folks, I'll have nothing to do with it."

"That is just the way I feel. I only wanted to see what you would say."

"My idea is just this," said Charlie. "If we conclude to build her, go to work and set her up, pay our bills as we go along, and before the money quite runs out, stop and earn more. I'm one of those chaps that want to know just how I stand every Saturday night."

"If we begin," said John, "we've got to go ahead, for everybody within twenty miles will know it; and if we slump, we might as well leave the country."

"I know just what they'll say," replied Charlie. "They'll say, there's a parcel of boys thinking

they are going to build a vessel, and a nice piece of work they'll make of it! lose what little they've earned, and find out they don't know as much as they thought for. I wonder Captain Rhines and Ben allow them to do it!"

"That," said John, "is just what was said when we undertook to carry on the farm; but they didn't laugh when harvest-time came."

"You say you want her two hundred tons, but you have said nothing about the dimensions."

"I want her a great carrier, and as good a sea-boat as she can be and carry. I know enough to know that a vessel can't be full and fast both; but there's a medium, to hit which you know more about than I do; if you don't, you know where to get information. I don't care how rough she is. We can't afford to do anything for looks. She can't look worse than the Ark. I wish you could have heard all that was said when she went into Havana! Why, the darkies laughed and opened their mouths till I thought they never would shut them again. I couldn't understand Spanish, but Flour told me what they said. All I have to say about dimensions is, I want her one hundred feet long, twenty-six feet beam, eight and a half feet deep. There is length enough for spars, depth

enough for two tier of molasses. If you can make her any other than a great carrier with that breadth of beam, you're welcome to. Where would you build her?"

"At my shore," said Charlie. "The timber is at the water's edge. Never was a better place to set a vessel."

"But there's no house where you could live."

"Build a log house," said Fred.

"Ten men would build her," said Charlie, "especially such men as Joe Griffin, Peterson, and Yelf. Peterson can use a broadaxe or whipsaw as well as a calking-iron. Uncle Isaac would work after haying, and Black Luce could cook for us."

"What would you do for a blacksmith's shop?"

"Build a log one," said John, "and burn our own coal."

"The hardest nip," said Isaac, "will be the sails, rigging, and anchors."

"I know that," said Charlie; "but if I find the timber, and turn in my work on the vessel, John turns in his, Fred pays the men in part out of his store, then we shall economize what little money we have to pay the men, buy sails and rigging."

"Mine will be all cash. I'll leave what I've got

in Captain Rhines's hands, part of my two months' advance, and I can leave a draw-bill on the owners."

"How long will you be gone?"

"About two years. We shall trade out there, or perhaps go from there to Europe and back."

"The *iron* will be a heavy bill," said John, "for it will have to be imported."

"If we make the timbers large, timber her close, put in plenty of knees and treenails, we can save on the iron," said Charlie. "There's a vast deal to be saved in a vessel if you don't stand for looks, especially if you have *time*, and the vessel will answer the purpose just as well. If a man contracts to build a vessel for so much a ton, in so many days, he has got to work right through, short days as well as long, perhaps in bitter cold weather, when it will take a man one quarter of the time to thrash his hands, and another quarter to stamp his feet, and very often the timber has to be dug out of the snow; then, if iron, wages, or pitch goes up, he must pay the price; he can't wait. But building as *we* shall, we can take advantage of all these things, and work in the long days, especially if we pay as we go along. I've known ship-

builders who were afraid to discharge a man, lest he should ask for his money."

"We are great fellows!" said Isaac. "Here we are talking about where we will build, and what we will build, fixing our yard, boarding our men, making all our calculations, and nobody has even *asked* what she's going to *cost*. That's neither according to reason nor Scripture."

"Speaking about Scripture," said Charlie, "just brings to my mind *one thing*, that, now we are all together, I *must* speak about. Here are three of us that have professed religion, and Isaac, I know, respects it."

"To be sure I do. I wouldn't have any *Murch* blood in me if I didn't."

"Well, here we are, laying plans, as I may say, for life, just starting out to do for ourselves, and we haven't one of us done anything for the Lord, or the support of his gospel."

"I should think," replied Fred, "that if we build this vessel, we shall have about load enough to carry. When we are twenty-one we shall be *called upon*."

"I think it would be a great deal better not to wait to be *called* upon. When we were so hard put to it, while father was paying for this island,

and had to live mostly on clams and sea-fowl, before we got any news from the Ark, and didn't know as we ever should, he, in his *poverty*, paid something for the support of the gospel. I think, when we are not pressed in any way, only pressing ourselves, we ought to do *something*."

"So do I," replied John. "Don't you know, Fred, how hard we worked to make that garden, and cut the hay on Griffin's Island, just to let Ben and Sally know that we had hearts and consciences, knew when we were well used, and who our friends were? I would like to show my heavenly Father the same thing."

"That's the talk, John," said Isaac. "I'll do my part."

"So will I," said Fred, "and I'm ashamed I said what I did; but you know I always was meaner than the rest of you."

"I don't know any such thing," said John. "You've had your parents to help, while we've had all we've earned, and all our clothes given us. I didn't mean we should give *much*, nor all alike, but we'll make a beginning. By and by, perhaps, we can do more."

"Now I feel right," said Charlie, "and we'll talk *vessel*. I didn't say anything about the price, be-

cause this is all talk. We shouldn't feel like *doing* anything, — at least I shouldn't, — before asking father, Captain Rhines, and Uncle Isaac. They are the best friends we've got in the world, know every crook and turn, and ain't like some old folks, who think everybody must be forty years old before they can do anything."

"We might as well talk about price," said Isaac, "as about the rest. What do you imagine she would cost?"

"The man I worked for in Portland sold a vessel of two hundred tons, hull and spars, for sixteen dollars per ton. He bought the stump leave of the timber, and hired it hauled six miles."

"That would be three thousand two hundred dollars for the hull and spars."

"Yes; what it would cost for rigging, sails, and the rest, you know better than I do."

"It would cost about half as much more."

Timber, labor, and board were cheap then — canvas, rigging, and iron extremely high.

"But then it ain't a going to cost us near that to build the same number of tons."

"Neither is it going to cost so much to rig and spar a sloop as a brig."

"Nor so much for iron-work," said John. "The

more spars, the more chain-plates, blocks, bolts, bands, boom-irons to make, and caps to iron."

"I believe she could be built in the way we should build her for twelve dollars per ton, and I don't know but less, hull and spars. The timbers and spars are not much account here; the hauling is nothing. But she will be an awful *looking* thing, though!"

"Then she would cost two thousand four hundred dollars, six hundred to a share, hull and spars, and half as much more to rig her."

"Yes, I know she can be built for that; but there won't be a brush full of paint on her, and I don't know but the name will have to be put on with *chalk*. I wouldn't go to a foreign port in her."

"I will, though. I'm fire-proof. I've been in the *Ark*. Let us calculate. Twelve dollars per ton. I can take a quarter at that rate, and more on a pinch; for in addition to my wages, I have made something by ventures."

"I can take a quarter," said Fred, "if I can have orders to pay some of the men out of the store."

"I," said Charlie, "can take a quarter by turning in my labor. If I hadn't bought my land, I could have taken more."



"Well," said John, "I can take a quarter, and turn in my work."

"What we want to know," said Isaac, "is, how much *cash* we can raise to pay the men, buy iron, rig her, and for other materials. I can pay my part in cash by the time it is wanted, and six hundred dollars of it now."

"I," said Fred, "can pay in cash one hundred dollars."

"I," said John, "two hundred."

"I," said Charlie, "one hundred."

"Well, there's so much to begin with. Now, the question is, *can* we begin with that?"

"We will carry all these calculations to father," said Charlie, "and ask him."

It was dark when they arrived at the house.

"Why, boys," said Ben, "where have you been all this time?"

"I should have thought," said Sally, "hunger would have brought you home before this. I told Ben you must have camped again in the top of the old maple. I'm afraid you'll have but a cold supper."

"I declare," said Charlie, "I never once thought about supper."

"I thought I'd been to supper," said John.

“You must have had some interesting matter on hand.”

“The most interesting thing in the world,” said Charlie.

“Do let me know what it is.”

“I’m going to after supper.”

## CHAPTER XII.

## GENIUS STRUGGLING WITH DIFFICULTIES.

WHEN the meal was concluded, the boys all surrounded Ben, and Charlie laid the whole matter before him. To their great delight and no little surprise, Ben gave his unqualified assent, told them they had a great and difficult enterprise before them, but that he admired their resolution, and to go ahead. When he concluded, there was a dead silence. Charlie was completely nonplussed, for he had arranged a series of arguments to meet the objections he supposed his father would make; and though he hoped, with the aid of his mother, to carry the point, he expected and was prepared to exert his powers of persuasion to the utmost. This hearty approval quite disconcerted him, and he was very much in the situation of Uncle Isaac, when he took Sally over to Elm Island to see her future home, prepared for tears, and, to his utter amazement, was greeted with a hearty, ringing laugh.

"But, father," asked Charlie, "do you think we've got money enough?"

"Yes, indeed, plenty to begin with; you've got enough, upon the largest calculations, to set her up, plank her, get out all your deck plank, water-ways and spars, and have them seasoning;" and without paying the least attention to Charlie's "ifs" and "ands," Ben went right on, to inquire where he was going to build her.

"At my shore," was the reply.

"But," said Isaac, "ought we not, I especially, to ask your father's advice? He was my earliest friend, set me agoing, and has always been interested in me. I shouldn't have been alive to-day if it had not been for him."

"Certainly; but he will approve of it; so we can go on and talk."

"Mr. Rhines," said Fred, "isn't she a monster?"

"No, Fred, not one whit too large to carry lumber or molassess; she won't be as big as the Ark; and the English mast and timber ships that come to Wiscasset and Portsmouth, are seven hundred tons and rising."

"Isn't she large for a sloop, sir?"

"Yes, but, as Isaac says, it will cost less to rig her, take less men to handle her, and if you find

she don't work well, you can stick another mast in her any time. Boys, let me plan a little for you; build her here, Charlie."

"O, father, what an awful job it would be to bring all the timber from Pleasant Point, over here! and how much it would cost!"

"It won't cost near as much as it would to bulid her there. If you build her there, all you've got is the timber; you must build a house to live in with a chimney, and even if it is a log house, it will cost something; you must hire or buy cattle to haul your timber, hay to keep them on, and somebody to cook for you. I've got a piece of land that I want cleared: if you will fall the whole piece for me, you can take your timber out of it. I'll board your men for less than it would cost you to board them, a great deal; you and John won't have to pay any board, for you'll be at home."

"But it's *pine* timber, father."

"Well, build her of pine; the trees are big enough to hew all the sap off, and it will last as long as you want her to, and she will be so buoyant you can't load her."

"But," said Isaac, "the keel, stem, stern-post, and keelson must be hard wood, or oak."

"Well, there's hard wood enough for that on the

lot; there's rock maple for keel, yellow birch for keelson, stem and stern knees, and spruce for knees above. Charlie can get oak stem, stern-post, breast-hooks, or any other particular sticks for bits or rudder he may want, at Pleasant Point."

"I never heard of a vessel being built of pine," said Charlie.

"I have; the Russians build all their frigates of fir, that ain't one quarter as good. There was a brig built at Salem of pine before the war, and I've heard she's a capital vessel; she has been to India three or four times, and they say, though she is sharp, she is so light she carries first rate. This old-growth, thin sap, pumpkin pine will outlast any oak, and won't eat up the iron, nor cost near as much to work it."

"That's so: there would be a great difference between dubbing pine and oak, or in sawing out plank with a whip-saw."

"So there would in hewing, and all through; there's nothing better for beams than a heart of hemlock."

"O, father, folks think hemlock ain't worth anything."

They will think differently one of these days: see how long a hemlock stub will stand, or a wind-

fall last, in the woods. There's hemlock rails in our fence, that my grandfather put there more than a hundred years ago; they are worn thin in the weather, but are just as sound as ever. It's all a notion about oak. Unless you want to build a vessel of six or seven hundred tons, to carry iron, salt, or stone, pine is just as good only make it larger."

"I'm sure, father, it would be a great deal better for us to build her here, and we are all very much obliged to you."

The others all expressed their gratitude to Ben.

"There are other things," said he, "that will be quite an object with you: here is a good workshop to shoot treenails, keep your tools in, and to work in rainy days. There's the barn floor, where you can use the whip-saw in the winter if you want to; then here are six great fat oxen, doing nothing, that you can take to haul your timber, which will all come down hill, and you can haul it as well on bare ground as on the snow. Here is a whip-saw, a cross-cut saw, and a threefold tackle; thus, you see there are many advantages in building here rather than in the woods; besides, if I am round, you can call on me when you have a hard lift or a wale piece to lug; you can give me

a lift in haying or hoeing, and that will be a mutual benefit."

"We'll do that, father; we'll put the haying through."

After the boys went up to bed, they expressed in no measured terms, to each other, their surprise at the readiness with which Ben had entered into their plans, and our readers may also feel the same; but the fact was, the boys had merely anticipated purposes which had for some time occupied the thoughts of Captain Rhines, Uncle Isaac, and Ben, and, indeed, been a matter of conversation between them.

They had long cherished the desire to make their property a source of benefit to their neighbors, the place where they lived, and the young men growing up around them. Captain Rhines wanted to take advantage of the facilities for ship-building furnished by the forests, and give to the young men growing up lucrative employment at home. He had, therefore, watched with great interest the development of Charlie's capacities in that direction, and for the same reason did all in his power to train Isaac, not merely in the matter of seamanship, but also to inculcate those principles of integrity more valuable than silver



or gold; and he was more pleased than he cared to show when John wanted to learn the trade of a blacksmith.

“When these boys get older,” said the captain to Ben and Uncle Isaac, “we’ll raise our own mechanics and seamen, and make the place what it ought to be.”

Thus, in Ben’s opinion, it mattered very little whether the boys had half money enough or not. He was pleased with their grit, told them to go ahead, intending, whenever their means failed, to help them out. The boys met with the like encouragement from Captain Rhines and Uncle Isaac, none of them aware, however, of the compact the boys had entered into to receive no aid, or dreaming that they would refuse it if proffered.

Captain Rhines now drew up their building contract in due form, although it was good for nothing in law, since no one of them was of age, except Isaac, and he but just twenty-one, though he called the others *boys*.

“Now, Mary,” said Captain Rhines, rubbing his hands, after the boys had gone, “we’ve got all our chickens at home once more, and we shall see what they will do.”

The boys lost no time in giving him the desired information.

The birch they were going to build on Indian Island, the pickerel they were to catch in Charlie's pond, the bears they were to kill, and exploring expeditions to be undertaken, were forgotten, driven from their minds by the expulsive power of this new affection.

It is not our design to enter into the details of ship-building. Boys, if they want to build ships, must begin with boats, and go into the ship-yard, as Charlie did, where they will find competent instructors. We intend merely to give such details as may note the progress made, and show the indomitable energy of those who laid the foundations of our commerce, the difficulties with which they were compelled to struggle, and the rude beginnings from which the fleet, and beautiful specimens of naval architecture that now grace our seaports, have grown.

There was no scientific draughting of vessels then. No close models, or even rack models. There were, indeed, among carpenters, some few general principles; but the whole shaping of the vessel was by the eye, judgment, guess-work.

Let us see how Charlie went to work; for it was

not much like the way ship-builders go to work now, and quite original. He took a piece of board, a little over two feet in length by one in width, and planed it perfectly smooth. This he dignified with the name of a draughting-board, although, as we proceed, our readers may think there was very little draughting about it. Charlie dearly loved a sharp model. He wanted something that would sail. His first model was a mackerel. His first efforts in boat-building had all been in that direction, and were successful. His tastes would have been gratified had he been set to build a clipper or a pilot-boat. He was now compelled to do violence to these inclinations, by stern necessity to abjure all ideas of grace and beauty, consult only *profit*, and build this "box," as he termed her. He was not devoid of experience in this direction. It was just the kind of vessel he had worked upon in Portland, designed for the same business, with the exception that there were some attempts at finish about them, the wales and bulwarks being foreplaned. In the cabin was some joiner-work; the wales and bulwarks were daubed with lamp-black, fish-oil, and red ochre, but the bottom was left rough, and pitched. Here their means would admit of no such attempt at ornament.

Captain Rhines and Ben had determined to allow the boys to proceed entirely in their own way, giving no advice till it was asked, nor offering to aid till they were in *extremity*.

Charlie was by no means inclined to adopt notions without examination. He knew from the report of all the sea captains that the vessels Mr. Foss built, though carrying enormous cargoes, and *profitable*, were, when deep loaded, — and that was nearly all the time, — terrible things to steer and live in, and would not sail much more than a raft, and *thought* he knew the reason. They were so full aft, and the transoms so low, that when this great buttock was brought into the water by a heavy cargo, they could not be otherwise than unmanageable. The bilge also went up with a square turn, resembling a scow. Without presuming to criticise, Charlie, while at work, had been constantly revolving these matters in his mind, listening to the criticisms made, and the improvements suggested, by masters and seamen. He knew the *Perseverance* sailed well and steered well, no matter whether she was deep or light, and so did his boats.

“I’ll see if I can’t make her steer and sail a little better than a log, and carry just as much,” said

Charlie, as he sat under the big maple with the board on his knees, a piece of chalk and compasses in his hand. "I'll give her a round side, instead of a square knuckle."

He at length determined, while giving her a long floor and large breadth of beam, to cut through at the bow and stern, and sharpen the ends something like his boats, instead of keeping them full, like the vessels he had worked on. Upon a scale of a quarter of an inch to a foot, he drew lines to represent his keel, stem, and stern-post. He then marked on the keel the dead rise amidships, forward, and aft, and with a limber batten drew a line through these points, forming a true sweep. This he called the rising line. On this line he divided up the rise on every timber, giving a very long floor, kept well out forward; next marked on the keel the length of his floor at the midships, forward and after frames, drew a line through these points, which he called his shortening line, to regulate the length of the floor timbers, and also dividing them up on this line, marked the respective lengths by letters of the alphabet, as he had their dead rise by numbers; marked on perpendiculars drawn from the keel the breadth both amidships, forward, and aft, and the depth, and drew a line

through these points, representing the shape of the top and the hanging wale. The curve of the stem and the rake of the stern-post not suiting him, he rubbed out his work, and drew it again and again, till he was satisfied; then went to the shop, and with a pencil and dividers, took it off on the other side of the board, making some little further alterations. These three lines on a board were all that Charlie had to guide him, as far as lines were concerned, in building his vessel. He now wanted to represent the round of the side, that he might see how it would look on a larger scale than he could if on a board, and took a queer method to obtain his end.

At the mouth of the brook was a flat, smooth beach of white sand, so hard that when wet an ox would not print it with his foot. He took a pole eighteen feet in length, drove a nail through one end of it, bored a hole in the other end, and made a long, pointed peg to fit it. He represented on the sand the actual length of the vessel, stem, stern, and floor timbers; then, fastening one end of the pole to the ground by the peg, in such a manner that it would revolve, he, by means of the nail in the other end, swept out the round of the whole side, till he got a shape to suit

him, then took it off, and reducing it to a proper scale, transferred it to his board.

His draughting, such as it was, being thus finished, he was prepared, having the proportions and dimensions, to make his moulds.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## SCATTERING FRAMES.

By the modern process of scientific draughting, an exact mould of every timber in the vessel is made in the moulding loft, from lines drawn on the floor, the bevel of each timber ascertained, and marked on the mould. These moulds are then taken into the forest, or wherever the timber in its rough state is, and it is hewed out to these moulds.

They are often packed up, taken to Virginia or Delaware, and the whole frame of a vessel moulded with such accuracy, that when it is brought home and set up, if it does not come within half an inch, it is considered bungling work.

Thus a vessel can be commenced at different points, by different parties of workmen, and built with the greatest despatch. All that is needed is men and money enough. They can all be at work at once, and a large ship can be built in ninety days as well as in a thousand. One gang begin to stretch out and put together the keel, which is



brought into the yard rough-hewed, and put on the midship frames, which are put together and raised at once. While this is being done, another gang are at work upon the stern, another upon the stem, which are ready to go up with the rest, another making the windlass, and still another the rudder. In the mean time the blacksmith, knowing the exact model of the future ship, and size of everything, can make the iron-work ahead, before the stem and stern are set up. Another gang begin to put on the plank, and another, whose business it is, bore every hole and drive every bolt. The joiners plane the whole outside of the ship, smooth up everything, and do all that comes in their line. The calkers and painters follow close at their heels, and after them the riggers.

But all this accuracy and despatch, resulting from a division of labor, has been a work of time, brought about by the efforts of many minds, and from very rude beginnings.

We cannot go into detail. It is sufficient to say that, in the present system of what is termed close modelling in this country, the master workman puts together with screws or keys, so they can be taken apart at pleasure, some pieces of soft pine, half an inch in thickness, three feet, two, or eigh-

teen inches in length, according as he intends to go upon the scale of a fourth of an inch or an eighth, more or less, to a foot.

From this block he cuts out half his future vessel, making it to suit his eye. As these pieces, being in leaves, can all be taken apart, he can take by measurement the exact proportions of every part on the floor of a large loft, mark them down, enlarged to the full size, and from these make his moulds of every timber.

It is evident that the mechanical genius here lies in making this model, shaping the vessel in the mind of the architect. All, after this, is a matter of measurement and arithmetic. It requires mathematical ability to take off this complicated system of lines from the model, a clear head and mechanical ability to make the moulds; but after this any one who can handle tools can follow the patterns, and cut out the timber. But carpenters were hundreds of years getting as far as this, although they were building vessels all the time, some very good, where the workman was possessed of superior genius; but the great majority were wretched models, requiring an enormous waste of time, labor, and timber.

The first decided approach to the present method

was the rack model, which consists in fastening several pieces of board edgewise to a flat surface, to represent the frames of a vessel, and cutting out the model on the edges of these. By measurements from these, the moulds were made, which insured accuracy, economized labor and timber. The first water-line model now in use was made by Orlando B. Merrill, of Newburyport, in 1794; but, like all new things, there were prejudices against it. The old carpenters would have nothing to do with the "newfangled thing."

It was a long time before it was used in Massachusetts, and thirty-six years getting into Maine. The first vessel built from the new plan there was the ship *Burmah*, of Portland, built by Waterhouse, from New York, in 1831, for the Messrs. Oxnerds, who came there and modelled her; but, after all, she was not so good a vessel as many built on the old plan, to the great delight of the old carpenters, who "knew it would turn out just so." Even then they got no farther than the forward and after frames, but had to timber out the ends by guess for a long time. The fact is, the ground of success lies in originating the model. Thus the same principles are involved in both methods, whether a man holds all the proportions of a

vessel in his mind to a great extent, sets her up, and makes his model as he goes along, altering his ribbands and cutting his frames to suit his ideas, or does it all on a block of wood beforehand. The same man will build as good a model in one way as the other. The difference is, that in one case he knows, when he has made his model, precisely what kind of a vessel he will have. The draughting from the model is a matter of mathematics. The result must follow as inevitably as a sum in the rule of three, if rightly stated and accurately worked. In the other way he cannot know this till she is timbered out. To work by the first method, some little education is needed; in the other, not the least.

Another more important matter is the great saving of time, rendering it possible for all parts of a vessel to go on together, and the great saving of timber.

The man who works from the modern plan knows just what wood he needs to form every timber; whereas, in the old way, some of the timbers were half cut off, some had to be thrown away, and others that would not fill up the ribband furred out; but neither time nor timber was worth a third as much then as now. A mast that cost

sixty dollars then now costs two hundred and forty dollars, while those of the largest size cannot be obtained at all, but must be *made* in pieces and hooped. A carpenter who was worth a dollar a day then is worth four now, and it costs twice as much to feed him.

You will perceive, my young friends, there is the same, and even greater, scope for ability now than there was then, with this difference, that there is a greater opportunity for sham. Ship-carpenters can now pony in ship-building as well as in these days of mathematical keys and translations; students can “pony” in algebra and *Æschylus*. Then they had to make their own keys and unlock their own doors.

All the way a carpenter, who was a good mechanic, but not possessed of ability to model a vessel, could build one, was to get some one who had to timber her out to the ribbands, after which he could finish her; but then everybody knew it. Now a person, by paying for it, may (privately) get any kind of a model he likes, build from it, and nobody — or but a very few — the wiser. Thus a man with modern helps can build vessels, and good ones, who, for the life of him, could not have gone to work, set up, and built a vessel, as Charlie did on Elm Island.

A master workman meant brains then, though the workmanship was rough and the beginnings rude. Even in this first rudest form of building, accuracy, by a person of genius, could be obtained. If they made one side of the vessel fuller than the other, it was the result of negligence, not of necessity, by suffering their shores to slip, or not proving their work by a plumb line.

Mr. Foss was one of those rude beginners. He built vessels on the same general principle as the *May Flower*. Charlie was another; but having received the instructions of Mr. Foss, listened to the remarks of seamen, the result of experience in the actual management of vessels, and with greater genius than his master, he had already, and even in this rude craft, made improvements. What is more, they were improvements that he had originated, and the principles of which were first suggested to his mind by taking the model from the fish.

We have seen how perfectly prepared the scientific draughtsman is to go with his moulds into the forest, and mould his timber. Let us now ascertain how our young ship-builder, alone on Elm Island, went to work from the scanty data he had to make moulds to cut timber by. All his

three lines told him was the shape of the floor timbers, the proportional length of them, the shape and sheer of the top; and his pole, with a nail in it, the sweep of the side.

He made moulds from his rising line of the floor timbers, of the stem and stern-post from their shape on the board; his shortening line gave him a water line along the heads of his floor timbers, the rising-line the shape of the bottom.

But now his lines fail him. He has not, like the scientific draughtsman, a line for every timber, from which to make his moulds. Well, he don't make any more, except five or six, of what he calls "scattering frames." His third line has given him the length of the vessel, and general shape on top, and the sweep on the sand of the way in which her side will round; and he goes to work, and makes by his eye, and what aid he can derive from these moulds futtocks, naval, and top timbers, which, put together, form the side, cuts and alters them till they suit his eye; and that is all there is about it. When he gets them done, he calls them the moulds of the scattering frames. He makes five or six of them, perhaps more — one amidships, one at the forward and one at the after floor timber. They are called scattering frames because

they are scattered along the keel for guides. By and by we shall see what he will do with them. Instead of making, as is now done, a mould for every timber, amounting to hundreds, and occupying weeks, he makes no more. His moulds are all made, and he is ready to cut his timber. He will, however, lose four times the amount of time, fussing, guessing, and moulding his vessel as he goes along, and doing work over two or three times, than he would if he had known the present method.

In cutting timber there is a great deal of work to be done with the narrow axe, and a great deal of digging out roots for knees, for which it is not necessary to employ skilled labor. There were also, in this new country, many men who had been used all their lives to handling a broadaxe, hewing ton timber for exportation to Europe, and ranging timber for the frames of buildings. The saw-mills, in those days, especially in new places, where there were not means to purchase machinery, were in a very imperfect state, possessed but little power, could not saw greater length than twenty feet, while the carriage, instead of being run back by touching a lever, and by the power of the water-wheel, as at the present day, was slowly



and laboriously pushed back by turning a wheel with the foot. Mill-cranks were all imported from England, and people, under the pressure of necessity, made cranks of a crooked root, sometimes hunting for weeks in the woods to find one that had the right turn, and was of tough wood. This was the case with the mill in Charlie's vicinity, which, however, was six miles off.

In this state of things there was a great deal of sawing done with a whip-saw. It was cheaper, in many cases, to do this than to haul the timber a great distance to a mill. There was no other way when plank and boards were required longer than the mills; but with the whip-saw you could have it whatever length you wished. In ship-building it is especially desirable to have the stuff as long as can be worked, as there will be fewer joints to calk, less danger of leaks, and greater strength. Even now a great deal of long stuff is sawed with a whip-saw.

This species of labor then being so much in vogue, plenty of men could be found, who, from youth, had been accustomed to the use of the broadaxe and whip-saw. They were not carpenters, could not edge planks, fay knees, make scarfs in keels, as Joe Griffin, Uncle Isaac, and

Yelf could; but for cutting timber in the woods, beating it out, with a master workman to boss them, and for two thirds of the work in the shipyard, they were just as good, and would work for a great deal less wages.

John Rhines, who would not have any blacksmith work to occupy him till they began to put the timber together, was equally useful with the narrow axe in cutting, and as a teamster in hauling the timber. Charlie, who was keenly alive to all these matters, sat down, pencil in hand, to calculate.

“My plank,” he said, “and wales must be sawed with a whip-saw. My deck plank, I need about nine thousand five hundred feet; wales, three thousand three hundred; outboard and ceiling plank, two thousand four hundred feet.”

Knowing the price of sawing at the mill per thousand, how many feet two men would saw in a day, and about what it would cost to hire the kind of men I have described, who could saw and hew both, he found he could saw his deck plank for less on the island than it would cost to raft the logs to the mill, have them sawed, and get them back.

In addition to this, he knew what length the

mill would saw, and that, as the planks must butt on the beams, there would be a piece to cut off of almost every plank, when he would lose the timber, and expense of sawing and cutting; whereas, knowing the exact dimensions of his deck, he could cut his logs the length he wanted them, lose no timber, and only pay for cutting and sawing what he used.

The first thing Charlie did, after making these calculations, was to construct fixtures for four men to saw, both out of doors and in the barn, make a gin, with a windlass and a tackle on it, to hoist the timber up on the stage. Thus, in fair weather, they could work beside the vessel, and in stormy weather in the barn.

When the two boys had arranged these matters, Charlie hired four men, such as we have described. Two of them were Eaton and his brother; one of whom, Danforth, shaved the clapboards for Ben's house. The others were Thorndike, that smart man who worked with Uncle Isaac, and helped the boys plough the garden; the other, our old acquaintance, Joel Ricker, who came to Elm Island to wrestle with Ben. By the advice of Uncle Isaac, Charlie sent for him.

“You don't want many men,” said Uncle Isaac,

“because Ben has not room for a great crowd; so you must have them strong. He’s a master strong, smart man, and he’ll be a real pleasant fellow, now Ben has brought him to his bearings, and taken the wind out of him. Then, when you come to have Joe, Yelf, and one or two more, you’ll have a whole team, I tell you.”

“And you, Uncle Isaac, O, do come!”

“Well, if I can get anybody to do my harvesting, I will, when you begin to put timber together, and need carpenters.”

Charlie hired the four men for three shillings each, per day. The first thing he cut was the stocks for deck plank, hauled them out, and some of them into the barn, in order to keep his men at work sawing in rainy weather, and in order to permit the plank to season. He next began to cut his floor. We have said that the modern carpenter takes a mould for every timber into the woods. What do you suppose Charlie did? He took a pole, thirteen feet long, the length of his longest floor timber, with the dead rise of each timber marked on one side, and the length of each, in letters of the alphabet, on the other. This he called the rising rod. When the men cut a stick, he laid this across it, and measured down from the middle for his rise,

according to the scale on the rod, and lined it out; then they cut it the right length, and beat off the wood to lighten it for hauling. As for the other timber, knowing the length, he guessed at the shape.

In this rude way, to modern eyes, he cut his frame; and in about forty days the timber was in the yard, and the stocks for planks and wales at the saw-pit. It required no small degree of mechanical ability to build a vessel in this way. Sometimes they got them fuller on one side, so they would sail faster on one tack than the other. It was just like preaching without notes. Sometimes you'll hit first rate, and then again you won't.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## CHARLIE ACHIEVES SUCCESS.

IN the modern mode of building, the carpenter will stretch out his keel, begin to timber out in the middle, perhaps timber out as far as the forward and after frames, and even put in some ceiling, before raising the stem and stern, because the vessel is all modelled, and he can put every timber in her, and hold her together with ribbands without putting on a single plank. But in the old mode, nothing could be done without the stem and sternpost, as they were needed to shape her by. We shall now see what use Charlie made of his scattering frames, as he called them, since they are to play a very important part.

Although Charlie was not working by contract, and limited as to time, yet he thought he should need ten men to handle the timber, which was all green and of large size, especially as, being on an island, it was not very easy to procure more. He already had six; Uncle Isaac, Joe, and Yelf would

make nine: four of these, however, would be employed in sawing, and the whip-saw must be in steady use, in order that plank and wales might be in readiness, since, in his method of working he must plank up as he went along; it was also necessary that his deck plank should be sawed out and stuck up to season. This would leave him but five men to work on the frame and handle the timber. He therefore hired four more. He could, upon occasion, call the men from the saw-pit, John from the anvil, and, more than all, he could have the aid of Ben, in case of a heavy lift. Ben's house now very much resembled a bee-hive, both as to the number of its inhabitants and their industry. There was no ten-hour system then. It was, begin with the sun and work as long as you can see to pick up your tools. But on the other hand, as the men were not so particular as at the present day, to work just so long to a minute, inasmuch that, if the axe is uplifted, and the clock strikes six, they won't let it fall, so neither was the employer. The master workman was not always on the watch to see if a man stopped to rest his back or light his pipe; whether he ground his tools in his own time or that of his employer: if a man had a first-rate story, not too long to tell, he told it.

Sometimes, if a coon ran across the yard, or a squirrel got in among the timbers of the vessel, the master workman would go for him with the whole crew at his heels; and then, enlivened by a little fun, they would work enough faster to make it up. Where all were neighbors, men of principle, and calculated to earn their wages, and unwilling to be outdone, there was no necessity for drawing lines, as with the kind of labor often found in yards at the present day.

Henry Griffin, coming home from sea, resolved to give it up, and learn the blacksmith's trade, as he was, like all the Griffins, strong, willing, and ingenious. John gladly received him as an apprentice. Thus the family, including the children and Sally's hired girl, numbered twenty-two. Taking away the partition between the workshop and the wood-shed, they threw it all into one room, which made a splendid workshop in rainy weather, large enough to hew timber or joint deck plank. The chamber overhead they filled with beds, while Charlie, John, Henry, and Ben, Jr., slept in the sap camp. It was such a handy place, after they had worked from sun to sun, to run out and shoot a coon among the corn in the moonlight evenings!



The stem and stern-posts were bolted on to the keel, lying on the ground; the whole was raised together and held in position with shores, and the transom bolted on when it was half up. Charlie now took the moulds and moulded his scattering frames, and fastened them, together with the floor timbers, to the keel. These frames, extending from the keel to the deck, and ranged along at intervals from stem to stern, kept in position by spruce poles spiked to them and to the stern and transom, and also to cross pawls at their tops, gave the outline of the whole vessel. In the modern process of working, the timber, being all accurately moulded from the draught, the timbering out is a very rapid process—the planking, fastening, and finishing occupying a much greater length of time.

But in respect to Charlie, the regulating of these scattering frames, being accomplished entirely by the eye, was not only a good deal of work, but it was a very anxious period, since upon this depended the whole shape of his vessel.

It was no light matter for a boy, not quite twenty, with such men as Uncle Isaac, Joe, and Yelf looking on, to model a vessel.

They offered no advice; Charlie asked none. He would set up a scattering frame, squint at it,

draw it in or let it out, cut it away, shape it with the axe or adze to suit his eye, then put up another. He proved his work by a plumb-line, as he was determined that one side should not be fuller than the other.

This doing and undoing,— for some of the frames were cut half off,— occupied a vast deal of time, as nothing could be prepared beforehand. It was not so very slow work when they tumbled them in any how, letting anything go that came within hail, not concerning themselves whether she was fuller one side than the other; but it *was* in Charlie's way, who would have everything in proportion, however rough it might be, no matter how much time it occupied.

The weather was cold, the ground hard-frozen. Charlie was anxious to plank up before he left off. The custom was to plank up to the heads of the floor timbers, then put in another set, plank up to them, and so on.

“Uncle Isaac,” said he, “the scattering frames are all in, and nearly all the others. You can see the shape of her. How do you like her? I'll make any alterations that you or father think for the best.”

“Don't disturb anything. Don't start a cross-

band or a ribband. She'll steer well, carry like blazes, sail well for a full vessel, or I'm much mistaken. Joe and your father are of the same opinion."

"She looks better than I expected," said Charlie, drawing a long breath, struggling to conceal his delight under an appearance of indifference. "I wish we were able to finish her in good shape, smooth her up, and paint her."

"I can see the boat-model in her. You haven't got that out of your head, and I hope you never will."

"I'll tell you what I'll do, Uncle Isaac. I'll build a yawl for her, that shall be as handsome as any of the boats Isaac will run afoul of—you see if I don't. Do you think it would do to plank with these green plank? or would they shrink all up—make an open seam to eat up oakum?"

"Shrink? No, indeed! They are froze as hard as a rock, and won't shrink one mite if you put them on frozen."

"Is that so?"

"Yes, indeed. A piece of timber, hard-frozen, is as small as ever it will be. I've laid a house-floor with boards green from the mill, in the dead of winter, put them down froze, and the next July you couldn't put a pin in the joints."

“Then I will plank her up, and knock off till spring. It is not profitable to hire in these short, cold days. John and I will do what we can this winter, which will make our money hold out.”

“What are you going to make your treenails of?”

“White oak, of course.”

“I wouldn’t.”

“What would you make them of?”

“Spruce limbs.”

“Spruce limbs? That’s a funny thing to make a treenail of!”

“They are better than white oak. They are hard, stiff, all heart, and full of pitch. They’ll never rot.”

## CHAPTER XV.

## DIFFICULTIES WHET THE EDGE OF RESOLUTION.

WHILE Charlie and his men were hewing the timber, John Rhines and his apprentice were getting ready to do the iron-work.

They built a blacksmith's shop of logs, — the floor was of earth, — made a bench, and shove-windows. Leaving the rest to complete in rainy days, they began to prepare coal. Very little coal, except charcoal, was then used by blacksmiths, small quantities being imported from England into the seaports, but none at all used in the country shops.

The boys could not afford to buy it. John and Henry went into the woods, and cut birch and maple into proper lengths for their purpose. Then, on a flat piece of ground they built up a little cobwork of small sticks of dry wood, forming a little chimney about six feet high. They then set green sticks of cord-wood up around this chimney in a slanting direction, filling the interval

between with short sticks. When a sufficient quantity of wood was set up, they rounded the top with shorter sticks. They dug green, strong turf, and covered the pile all over with it, grass-side down, except the top of the chimney, and some air-holes at the bottom, to make draught enough to keep the fire steadily burning. Then they threw earth all over it, and stopped the cracks where the pieces of turf came together, filled the chimney full of shavings and dry stuff, and kindled it at top. When it had burned down into the body of the kiln, and the whole mass of wood was hot and fairly on fire, they put turf on top, and made all tight, the air-holes at the bottom affording just draught enough to make the wood coal, without burning to ashes, as it would in an open fire. By these air-holes they could regulate the draught. If the wind blew hard, and the draught was too great, stop them up on the windward side; if too weak, open them.

Boys will have fun out of anything. One wouldn't think there was a great deal of fun in watching a coal-kiln night and day, so as to be ready to fling on earth, or put on turf, if the fire should burst out anywhere; but they had lots

of fun out of it, and the best times imaginable. They built a camp, made it rain-proof by putting a board roof on it, built a chimney of stones, where they could cook in rainy weather, though in fair weather they always built their fire before the door of the camp, hunter fashion. They loved to see the stars, the fire flashing through the trees; and somehow things tasted sweeter when the kettle hung by the crotch out of doors. The care of the coal-kiln did not occupy much of their time; but one of them was always obliged to be there, in the event of the fire breaking out. Thus, while one kiln was burning, they cut the wood for another. Rare times they had of it in the evening! They roasted coons, that could always be found round the edge of the corn, clams, and ears of corn, baked potatoes, and had all the maple sugar they wanted, roasted eggs, and sometimes a chicken. Neither did they lack for company. Charlie, Uncle Isaac, and Joe were pretty sure to be there every night. Sometimes Sally would take her knitting-work and come up; and it was by no means rare for all on the island, except the baby and whoever had the care of him, to come; and there was not a happier visitor at the camp than Tige Rhines, who insisted on coming to the island

with John, and could not be persuaded to return without him, although Captain Rhines, who was a frequent visitor to the island, used all the arts of persuasion he was master of to engage him to return with him.

It is no marvel the coal-kiln was a popular resort. The captain never failed, when he came on, to bring apples, pears, plums, and a jug of new cider to John. He was by no means chary of his treasures; and it was quite agreeable to tired men to sit around a blazing fire, eat apples and pears, perhaps a piece of baked coon, with a roast potato, drink a mug of sweet cider, and tell, or listen to, a good story.

Upon such occasions Joe Griffin generally kept the company in good humor. Ricker, who had now become a universal favorite, contributed a song. The change in this man was most remarkable. From being a bully and a brag, he had become a most agreeable, pleasant companion. He had also manifested a great capacity for handling tools; since latterly, the four men having sawed out all the plank that was needed for present use, Charlie had taken him and Thorndike from the saw-pit, and set them at work on the vessel.



“The best thing that ever happened to me,” said he to Uncle Isaac, “was when I fell into the hands of Lion Ben. Before that, I thought there was nobody could handle me, and the idea came near ruining me. I left off work, thought of nothing but wrestling; was running to every launching, raising, hauling, muster, and log-rolling I could hear of, and was straining myself all to pieces.”

“I,” replied Uncle Isaac, “used to wrestle a good deal in my young days, and I know that in some of those scrapes I have injured and worn myself out more than I have in a year’s work; yes, more than in two.”

“No doubt you have. I wrestled once, at North Yarmouth, till the blood spun from my nose a stream, and I was as sore the next day as though I had been pounded with an ox-goad. Then I was always treating and being treated, and got so I couldn’t settle myself to work; and liquor was fast getting the upper hands of me; but after I went home from here, I thought of Mr. Rhines’s advice, and determined to follow it. I never was among such people as the folks are here. They don’t drink as they do up our way, — at least those that I’ve seen and worked with, — and are just like brothers.”

“There’s plenty of drinking here, but you have been among those who have seen the evil of it, and left it off. There’s not a man you work with, myself included, but, three years ago, drank spirit. Now we think we’ve found a better way, one that is more pleasant, better for the pocket, the health, and the conscience.”

“It *is* a better way, and I’m going to join you, and do as you do.”

“You are a young man, Mr. Ricker. Have you any parents depending on you?”

“No, sir. My parents both died when I was a child. My father was killed by a falling tree. My mother took sick and died, and my uncle brought me up.”

“Well, then, just stay here amongst us. There is plenty of work to do round here — chopping, logging, and river-driving. There will be more vessels built here, too. I don’t know whether Charlie will work much longer or not; but if he don’t, I will give you and Thorndike work all winter, logging and making shingles; and when you are not at work, you’re welcome to make my house your home.”

“I’m very much obliged to you, Mr. Murch, and shall be right glad, if Master Bell don’t work, to take up with your offer.”

“There’s plenty of land here, that can be bought cheap — good land, too; and there’s plenty of nice young women, that know how to spin and weave, and would make a striving man a good wife, take care of whatever he brings into the house; and, though I say it myself, there’s not a more industrious, neighborly set of people in the United States of America than live in this town; and you travel the country through, and you won’t find a better principled, more enterprising set of young men; and I mean to do what little I can to encourage them, and there’s others feel just as I do.”

“I mean to be governed by your counsel, Uncle Isaac. But, to tell the truth, there’s a young woman up our way that I’ve had some dealings with, and we were engaged once; but she didn’t like my drinking, wrestling, and carousing about, and neglecting my work, and her folks set in, and that made a coldness between us. I love her as the apple of my eye, and I drank more to drown trouble.”

“You ought to think the more of her for not approving of your drinking and idleness.”

“So I do.”

“Well, then, all you have to do is, just to go on as

you are now doing, stay here out of the way of temptation, and build up a good reputation. The news won't be long getting back to your place. They'll miss you at musters and raisings, and begin to inquire, 'Where's Ricker? We want him to take hold of this man that's throwing everybody.' The answer will come back, 'Ricker's given up drinking and wrestling, and is at work on Elm Island, having the best of wages. People there think everything of him, and won't let him go. He's going to buy a farm, and live among them.' Take my word for it, the young woman will be the first one to hear of it; and in time matters will right themselves."

The first kiln that John and Henry burned contained forty bushels; the next, eighty. They burned one more, drew the kilns, and put the coals in a pen in one corner of the shop.

Captain Rhines came over to see how matters progressed, and spent the night. In the evening Charlie and John held a consultation in respect to iron, which would soon be wanted, and fixtures for the blacksmith's shop.

"We can get along," said John, "with an anvil, bellows, two pairs of tongs, hand hammers, sledges, and cold chisels."

“Won’t you need a vice?” asked Charlie.

“It would be handy; but there won’t be any screws to cut. I can get along without it.”

“What do these things cost?”

“An anvil will cost about fifteen dollars, a pair of bellows about thirteen, and a good vice about twenty-five.”

“That’s a good deal of money, just for tools, when we’ve got so little. We must pinch all we can on the hull, in order to be able to obtain the sails and rigging. That will be a heavy bill, and must be all cash.”

“Yes; but I can do without a vice, make the hammers, tongs, and other tools, and I think I can make the bellows; so there will be only the anvil, the steel, and iron to buy.”

Captain Rhines sat and listened, as they were talking in low tones in a corner, till he could bear it no longer; and taking Ben and Uncle Isaac aside, he told them what he had overheard.

“It’s too bad, Ben, to let such boys as these struggle along so! I’ll take the Perseverance, go to Portland or Boston, and buy them a complete set of blacksmith’s tools. If we build vessels, we shall want them.”

“Don’t you do it, Benjamin,” said Uncle Isaac;

“for the life of you, don’t you do it! You’ll do them more hurt than good. Hardship don’t hurt boys. It didn’t you and I. They are doing first rate — making grand calculations! It’s drawing out what’s in ’em. If James Welch had been put to it as they are, it would have been better for him, and saved his parents much misery.”

Ben siding with Uncle Isaac, the captain relinquished his purpose.

Perhaps most of our young readers have seen a pair of house bellows, — some have not, — stoves and coal fires having consigned them, for the most part, to oblivion; but they were a great institution once — from the homely kitchen to the highly-ornamented and gilded parlor ones.

Those boys who have not seen them can ask their grandmothers, which will save us some detail; and, as we have so many “last things” to say to you in this volume, it is quite an object.

A blacksmith’s bellows is double. The wood is six feet long, three feet four inches wide. Instead of having merely top and bottom of wood, they consist of three pieces of plank, and are double, having two clappers. The upper piece is solid; the middle piece has a hole and a clapper; the bottom, another hole with a clapper. The top and

bottom covers rise and fall by means of hinges at the end. The middle piece is permanent, and the bellows are hung in a frame by iron gimbals driven into the edge of the middle piece. They are worked by a long lever attached to the handle of the bottom board, the space between the boards being leather, which is distended by bows to prevent its collapsing too much when empty. The smith puts weights on the top plank to press it down, and force the air into the fire, and hangs another on the handle of the lower one to bring it down, and open the bellows to admit air. He lifts the lever, the bellows fill through the bottom. The moment he brings it down, the air is forced into the fire, and the upper portion of the bellows, where it is retained by the upper clapper. When the lever is raised again to refill, the weights on the upper cover are still pressing the air into the fire. Thus it is a draught all the time.

They made their covers, middle piece, and clappers, hung them with leather hinges, made the bows of ash, and in default of leather, covered them with new canvas, that was left from the sails of the Ark, closing the seams with pitch, — which they procured from the woods, — mixed with charcoal dust.

They found an old bolt, cut it in two on the edge of an old axe, made a fire heat, and pointed the ends on a stone for an anvil, and made gimbals to drive into the middle piece to hang their machine.

“What under heavens shall we make a nose of?” said John. “That beats me! If I had iron, I could make it; but there’s not a scrap more on the island.”

The nose of a blacksmith’s bellows is tunnel-shaped, and at the extremity enters an iron tube, called a tewel, which goes into the forge, and lies just under the fire.

“We could make the tewel out of a gun barrel. I’ve got an old Queen’s arm, at home, that’s spoilt.”

“Yes; but what shall we make the nose of? That must be broad-mouthed, and twice as big.”

“Make it of clay, and burn it in the fire.”

“It would be breaking. The heat would crack it; and I don’t know how we could fay it to the wood to make it tight.”

“Then make it of a piece of wood that has been soaking in salt water. It will be some way from the fire. We can keep watch of it, and wet it with a mop.”



“I don’t believe but we shall have to.”

“Why don’t you ask your brother Ben, or Uncle Isaac?”

“Let us make the frame to hang it on. Perhaps we shall think of something.”

Before they had finished the frame, John exclaimed, “I’ve got it, Hen! Just the thing! I’ve seen an old blunderbuss barrel, without any stock to it, kicking round Uncle Isaac’s shop. It will make nose and towel, both in one. I know he’ll give it to me. ‘The lame and the lazy are always provided for.’”

“What is a blunderbuss?”

“A short gun, bell-muzzled, and with an everlasting great bore, made to fire a whole handful of slugs and balls. They don’t use them now.”

“Go ask Uncle Isaac. Then take the boat, and go after it. As you come along, stop into Peter Brock’s shop, ask him to put it into his vice, and start the breech-pin for me.”

When they had obtained the old gun barrel, they completed their bellows, made a forge and forge-trough. They had no chimney—the gas went out through a hole in the roof.

John put some coal on the forge, kindled the fire, and started the bellows. They worked capitally.

“Hen,” said John, in high spirits, “that is what I call ‘raising the wind’ in more ways than one. We were only two days making these bellows, and one of them was a rainy day. That’s pretty good wages — six dollars and fifty cents per day!”

John and Henry now took the *Perseverance*, and went to Portland. John went directly to Mr. Starrett, who received him most cordially. He told him all the circumstances from beginning to end, upon which Mr. Starrett lent him an anvil that was rather small for his heavy work, and told him that Captain Pote had just got home from the West Indies, and brought a lot of old iron that he had bought there for little or nothing, and would sell for one fourth the price he would have to give at the warehouse. Probably he could pick out a great deal that would answer his purpose; that it lay on the wharf just as it was thrown out of the vessel.

John and Henry went to the wharf, and spent the whole day picking over the heap. They found cold chisels, punches, sledges, hand hammers, spikes, and ship’s bolts; eye bolts, ring bolts, stud-ding-sail boom irons, straps for mast circles and caps.

John bought what he thought would answer his

purpose, and threw it into the schooner. Mr. Starrett bought the rest of his iron for him cheaper than he could have bought it himself, because he knew just what description and quantity of metal were wanted. When it was all on board the vessel, Mr. Starrett came and looked it over.

“John,” said he, “you will make a great saving by buying that old iron. With very little labor, you will get the larger part of your fastening out of it, a good deal of iron-work for the spars, and all your thimbles. My boy, you will have a hard job with so few tools, to do what you’ve got before you; but you’ll win through it. If you have to hang up, and go to work to raise money, come to me. I’ll find you work.”

John thanked his friend, and they separated. He arrived home, got his iron into the shop, his anvil on the block, his tongs made, handles in the hammers and sledges two days before the carpenters put the keel together and wanted to bolt it. He had no tool to head spikes; so he just turned them over the anvil, making a head on one side, like a railroad spike. They looked queer, but answered the purpose just as well. Persons do not know what they can do till they are compelled to

exert their faculties to the utmost. It was this rude training in the school of stern necessity that has made this nation what it is.

We are to-day reaping the benefits of their trials, and shall continue thus to do, if we do not, by prosperity, become effeminate. The Pilgrims suffered terribly the first winter, because they came fresh from the homes of Old England, with the habits of that country, and were comparatively helpless. But suppose their children, born and reared in this country, had been placed in just the same circumstances, or a band of western hoosiers, how soon would they have built up log shanties, found clams and lobsters on the beach, fish under the ice, coons and bears in their dens, and when the spring opened, planted corn on a burn? The Pilgrims had been reared among conveniences, never been drawn out by necessity in that direction, and most of them died in the seasoning, being too old to learn.

But we see how Charlie conforms to the necessities of his position. Once put on the track, and encouraged by Ben and Uncle Isaac, he seems not one whit inferior to John Rhines in contrivance or resources to meet exigencies as they come along.

Charlie finished planking up the last day of December, and discharged all his men, except Ricker. Planking up a vessel was slow, hard work in those days, as they had none of the modern appliances to bring their plank to the timber, and nothing better to bore the innumerable holes through the hard timber than an old-fashioned pod augur, which must be started in a hole cut with a gouge. They bored from inside outward, because, the augur being destitute of a screw, it was easier.

There was no blacksmith work of any amount to be done till the carpenters began to work in the spring.

Henry Griffin went to work with Ricker in the barn, sawing out ceiling plank and other stuff. Charlie and John burnt coal enough to finish the iron-work, cut the small spars, and hauled them out. The mast and main boom were so large that Charlie was afraid to fall them till the snow was deeper, for fear of breaking or injuring them; however, as he knew the size of the spars, he made the caps, and John ironed them, after which he learned to saw with a whip-saw: this liberated Ricker, who was a most excellent broadaxe-man, having been accustomed all his life to hewing timber. Charlie set him at work upon the spars, while he himself,

having plenty of seasoned stuff, built a long-boat and yawl-boat for the vessel. In this way he could employ the two men, John, and himself profitably: the wages were less in the winter; the weather did not interfere with the sawing, which was done under cover. Ricker, indeed, worked under cover in the shop with Charlie, when it was stormy or severely cold, and helped him on the boats and the windlass.

Charlie built a beautiful yawl-boat, putting in gratings at the bow and in the bottom, with a fancy yoke of mahogany, using up the last of his West India wood in the operation, and in sheaves for the blocks. When she was done, he painted her handsomely.

“There,” said he; “they may laugh at the sloop, but I reckon they won’t at the boat. Isaac shall go ashore in as good shape as the best of them.”

Uncle Isaac had a lathe, and Charlie engaged him to make the blocks and turn the sheaves in the course of the winter.

They next made the rudder. Nowadays, when vessels are steered with wheels, the tillers are a straight stick of timber; but an old-fashioned one required a stick of very peculiar form, something the shape of the letter S; and what made it more

difficult to get them, was the fact that a great strain came on them, and they must be of tough wood. Joe Griffin had engaged to hunt up a stick in the woods, rough-hew it, and bring it to the island.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## SALLY COMES TO THE RESCUE.

TIME now passed very pleasantly; there was a smaller family; they were not exposed to the weather, and in the evenings enjoyed themselves very much. Charlie employed himself in the study of surveying, and was more or less occupied in making models of imaginary vessels and boats, poring over an old English work on the sparring of vessels, which he had borrowed of Mr. Foss. At that day labor was not divided, as it is now; carpenters were both spar-makers and joiners, bored all the holes, and put in the fastening, the blacksmith only riveting the bolts.

John occupied himself in contriving how to economize his iron to the greatest possible extent, and in what method, with the means and appliances at his disposal, he should make the rudder-irons, which, for a vessel of the size of the sloop, was a heavy, difficult job. There was a great deal more hard sledging connected with blacksmith work



then than at present. The smith can now purchase iron of almost any size and shape he wants: at that time there was no round iron, and the iron for small work must be drawn, or split up from large, square bars; it was this that made the old iron peculiarly valuable to John; it was of the right size, as the greater part of it had come out of old vessels; he found a great many bolts that only needed straightening, or a piece cut off the end.

One evening Charlie was studying, Ben reading a newspaper, Ricker asleep in his chair, and Hen Griffin making a windmill for Ben, Jr. John had been sitting for half an hour on a block in the chimney corner, the tongs in his hands, with which he took up little pieces of coal and squat them, without uttering a word. At length he flung down the tongs, and, jumping upright, cried, —

“Ben! Ben! look here!”

“Well, I’m looking straight at you.”

“You know we are going to be desperately put to it to raise money enough to buy sails and rigging, and are pinching all we dare to on the hull and fastening on that account.”

“Yes.”

“You know how they make booms in a river to hold logs; they take long sticks, and fasten them

together with iron, and sometimes with withes and ropes, and they hold acres of logs against the whole force of the freshet; and don't you know what a master-strain spruce poles, not more than six inches through, will bear — how they will buckle before they'll break?"

"Yes."

"Well, then, what's the reason we couldn't make wooden shrouds by bolting some tough spars to the mast-head and wales, and save shrouds and chain-plates, which would be a *tremendous* saving."

"There wouldn't be any give to them: when the mast sprung, it would bring all the strain on the poles, and carry them away."

"But," asked Henry, "why couldn't you put a dead-eye to the lower end, set it up with a lanyard, just like any rigging? Then there would be spring enough; or, if you didn't like to bolt to the mast-head, put rope at both ends: you would *then* save a good deal. I'm sure there would be no danger of losing the spars by the stretching of the rigging."

"They would be strong to bear an up-and-down strain, as strong as rope, but would be liable to be broken by anything striking them, when set up taut: suppose the boom should happen to strike them, or the yards, anchor-stock, or jib-boom of

another vessel hauling by in the dock? They wouldn't stand anything of that kind, like rigging."

"You say she's going to carry a topsail and top-gallant-sail; the topmast backstays would protect them from the boom; and as for the rest, you could carry spare ones in case of accident."

"That might do; but wouldn't the straps of your dead-eyes split the end of the stick?"

"Treenail it."

"Where could you get spars long enough, without having them two thirds as large as the mast?"

"Make them in pieces," said Charlie. "Split up a large tree with the whip-saw: I can find a big ash that will make four, or a spruce or yellow birch."

"Well, you *can* do it; but I should prefer rope."

"To be sure, father; but if we are hard up, put right up snug to it, we'll do it, sure."

When, afterwards, Ben told his father of this novel method of economy, the captain laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks.

"I wonder," said he, "what they won't think of next. I always thought myself indifferently good for contrivance; but they go ahead of me."

"They've made first-rate calculations, thus far, in everything."

“I guess Isaac was right: he said difficulty would spur 'em up, and draw 'em out. I should think it was doing it, if it has drawn that out of 'em.”

While this conversation was going on, Sally was sewing with all her might, improving the moments while the children were asleep: she had, nevertheless, been an attentive listener. At length, laying down her work, she said, “Charlie, I don't suppose you would think very highly of any advice or opinion coming from a woman in regard to these affairs.”

“Yes, I would, mother; I would think a great deal of your opinion about anything.”

“Well, then, I think I can help you about your sails.”

“*You*, mother!” cried Charlie, in astonishment.

“Yes, me. I think that I, and other women that I can find could weave the *greater* part, if not the whole, of the duck for your sails, if we could get the flax, and a good deal cheaper than you can buy it: perhaps it wouldn't look so well, but I'll be bound 'twould wear as well.”

“You've done it now, Sally,” said Ben. “That is the most sensible plan for saving I've heard yet. But do you know what an undertaking you've laid out for yourself? Why, there'll be over seven hundred yards of cloth in the mainsail alone.”

“Did you ever know me set out to do anything I didn’t accomplish?”

“No; except this.”

“I shall accomplish this.”

“But,” said John, quite bewildered, “I didn’t know canvas was made in looms, like other cloth.”

“All cloth is made in looms.”

“Yes; but I didn’t think sail-cloth was made in such looms as yours.”

“In England,” said Ben, “all the sail-cloth for their merchant and naval service is wove in such looms, as no English vessel is allowed to wear any other. If we were under England, as we were a few years ago, Sally couldn’t make this cloth if she wanted to; it would have to be made there; but they import the hemp and linen yarn from Russia and other places. It used to be all spun by hand, on a little wheel; but I understand of late they’ve got mills to go by water that spin.”

“But I shouldn’t think a woman could weave such heavy stuff.”

“Can’t they?” said Sally, going to a drawer, and taking out a piece of bed-tick that she had woven with four treadles, and beat up thick. “What do you think of that? Would any wind get through that?”

“Well, I’ll give up now; but still, I don’t see

how so much cloth as they use in England, and send over here, and, I suppose, everywhere else, *can* be made in such a small way.”

But this, which was entirely new to John, excited his wonder, and was so difficult of belief, was no matter of surprise to Charlie.

“*Small way!*” he exclaimed: “a good many strands make a rope. O, you don’t know much about England. Why, the people there are thicker than flies around a dead herring, glad to turn their hand to anything to get their bread, and thousands can’t get it; not because they are too lazy to work, but can’t get the work to do, are helped by the parish, and often die of hunger.”

“*Die of hunger!* That’s awful.”

“No more awful than true, though. There are whole villages in England — and I’ve heard my father say it’s just so in Ireland and Scotland — where, from year’s end to year’s end, all that the greater part of the people do is to raise, spin, and weave flax; those that are able to, hire land; but the poor, that can’t hire land, why, the merchants find the yarn, and give them so much a yard to weave it; and old people, seventy and eighty years old, that can’t do anything else, will do a little something at that; an old wife, that can’t get

across the floor without her crutch, and her head as white as a sheet, will sit in the corner and croon a song, because hunger drives her to it: men and women weave the year round."

"*Men weave?*"

"Yes, indeed; hundreds and thousands of them never do anything else all their lives — *couldn't* do anything else."

"I declare! a man weaving, sitting down behind a loom, doing women's work!"

"Yes, sitting down behind a loom; and thank God for the privilege."

"I guess they would keep me there a good while. I'd put on a petticoat, and take a dish-cloth in my hand, and done with it. Only think of Joe Griffin, Uncle Isaac, and our Ben weaving!"

"It is so there; and you go to one of their houses, knock at the door, and a man will come to open it, with his beard stuck full of thrums and lint."

"So you see, John," said Sally, "where sail-cloth comes from. You know old Mr. Blaisdell?"

"Yes."

"He was a weaver before he came to this country; and they say sometimes, of a rainy day, when his son's wife has a piece in the loom, he'll get in and weave like everything."

“But, mother, the vessel would rot on the stocks before you could spin and weave cloth enough for her sails: besides, where could you get the flax?”

“I’ve planned it all out; for I’ve been thinking of it ever since you set out to build the vessel, and will have the sails done before you do the hull, I can tell you.”

“I should like to know how,” said her husband.

“I’m going to begin right off, while my family is small. I want Charlie to go over to Fred in the morning, and tell him to buy all the flax and linen yarn he can get; he can pay in goods, or half goods and half money, and that will help him; the the yarn will do for the light sails: what we spin, we’ll spin a coarser thread, for the larger sails. Fred can send potash to Boston, and buy the flax. I think there’s flax enough round here: if not, there is in Boston; it is not long since a vessel-load of it was sent from there to Ireland. I’ll risk Fred for getting flax.”

“So will I,” said Charlie; “because he don’t have any opportunity to turn in his work, as John and I do, and will jump at the chance.”

“But the spinning and weaving!” said Ben.

“There’s Sally Griffin — she’s only Joe and herself to take care of: last time I saw her, she told



me they had only one cow; that she hadn't half enough to do: she'll weave a lot, and spin, too; so will Hannah Murch, and they've got the flax; so will my mother, and our Jane, Mary Rhines and Elizabeth. There's Danforth Eaton's wife hasn't chick nor child in the world, and old Mrs. Smullen's a capital spinner, and Mr. Blaisdell, a born weaver, who never did anything else till he came to this country, is getting rather old for hard work; his wife, too, and his son's wife and daughters, are weavers. I know as well as I want to that he wouldn't like anything better than to weave till spring work comes on, and every rainy day after; then there's the three Godsoe girls and their mother, living with their brother Jacob; the girls take in weaving, and the old lady can spin; there won't be much spinning; we can buy most of the yarn. When we begin to build, I will hire two girls, and one of them can weave most of the time in the corn-house. I know of lots more I can find. I'm going over with Charlie in the morning, and get Hannah Murch to help me hunt them up, and then give it all into the hands of Fred: there will be no trouble; everybody will be for it, because they see we are trying to start something to help the place. Just calculate for yourself: there's more

than a year to do it in; of that coarse cloth, a person would weave twelve yards in a day—three hundred and twelve yards a month, at least. Old Mr. Blaisdell alone would weave your mainsail in two months, or less; for he would weave fourteen yards a day. I have reckoned up seventeen now, and can find fifty. Now what do you think, Ben?”

“I think you’ll do it; for if you, Hannah Murch, and Uncle Isaac get together, you’ll set the town on fire.”

“O, mother,” cried Charlie, “you are the best woman that ever was, or ever will be. Now, mother, you didn’t think, when I told you that night at milking that there would be a vessel built here before five years, there would be one built before your own door in two, and you would make her sails.”

“But you remember I told you, when it *did* come to pass, I would send a venture in her: I’ve got lots of hens, and I want some money to buy an eight-day brass clock with, that shows the changes of the moon.”

“O, mother, we’ll raise lots of hens, and you shall have all the room in the vessel you want.”

The next morning Sally went round among her old friends and school-mates, who received her

with open arms, and entered heart and soul into her plan. Uncle Blaisdell was delighted, and told Sally he would oversee the whole work.

“If you had all the canvas these old fingers have wove,” said he, “it would make sails for a good many such vessels.”

Old Mrs. Yelf, contrary to all expectations, had recovered: Sally found her sitting by the fire, and she was greatly interested.

“Sally, tell Fred to bring me the yarn. I’ll weave enough for a small sail, if I die for’t. I shall glory in it, and an old lady’s blessing shall go with it. They’re good boys; they have begun right; they’ve sought the Lord in their youthful days, and to whatever they set their hands they’ll prosper.”

“We’ve got the sails under way,” said Charlie, “and got our iron: we shall want a good deal of tar, for she must have a brimstone bottom, or the worms will eat her all up in two months at the West Indies.”

“We can make that,” said John.

“Make tar?”

“Yes, indeed: cut down pine trees, take the limbs where we have cut timber and knees, and make a tar-pit. I know all about that.”

## CHAPTER XVII.

## CHARLIE'S THEODOLITE.

IT was now the latter part of winter; the snow was deep; Charlie began to think about cutting his mast, main boom, and bowsprit. He did not at first contemplate having anything above the top-gallant sail; but when Sally came home and related her conversation with Mrs. Yelf, Ben said, "Charlie you must gratify the old lady; it would be bad luck and a sin not to do so."

"But, father, there is no sail that she could weave cloth enough for."

"Well, then you must have one on purpose for her; have a flying royal; there will be no braces, the sheets will make fast to the top-gallant yard, it will furl right in with the top-gallant sail, the yard will be underneath the top-gallant stay and when the yard hoists up, the stay will go with it; it will be a little thing, not more than forty or forty-five yards: she can do that well enough."

The lower mast was no less than twenty-eight

inches in diameter when made, and eighty feet long. This required a tree of great size; there was no such one left in the lot from which the boys were to cut their timber, and they were obliged to buy one. The bowsprit, which was shorter, and the boom, which, though seventy-five feet in length, was much smaller, they could obtain on their own lot. There were trees enough on the island of much larger size; but those enormous trees, that would make a thirty-six inch mast for a man-of-war Ben didn't like to cut, now that the pressure of poverty was removed.

It would have been a great deal of work for Charlie to have gone on to his own land, broken a road through the deep snow to the back end of his lot to obtain it; then, to tow so large a stick six miles would have been a great undertaking in the winter time.

"Charlie," said Ben, "there's a tree stands a couple of rods to the north-east of the big pine that has the eagle's nest on it, large enough to make your mast. There's a short crook in it near the top; if it is long enough below that, I will sell it to you cheap, because the crook spoils it for a mast for a ship of the line, though it is large enough otherwise: let us go and look at it."

When they came to view it, Ricker, who was a man of great experience in the woods, thought it was long enough; Ben thought it was not; Charlie didn't presume to give an opinion, but his knowledge of surveying helped him out of the difficulty. "I'll measure it," he said.

"You can't climb it," said Ben, "and there's no scrubby tree to fall on to it, to climb: how are you going to measure it?"

The ground around was level; Charlie made a mark on the tree where it was to be cut off, then measured a distance from it equal to the length of his mast, and drove down a stake; then cut two straight ash sprouts, one two feet, the other one foot long, found the middle of the longest, made a hole in it with the point of his jackknife, whittled the end of the short one to a wedge, and stuck it into it. He now got down on his hands and knees at the stake, held the short stick as nearly level with the mark on the butt of the tree as possible, then sighted over the ends of the two sticks; his eye struck the tree a short distance below the crook.

"It's a snug rub, but I guess 'twill go; cut it down. I'll risk it."

Ricker and John soon brought the great tree to

the ground, when it was found to be seven inches longer than required. These two ash sprouts were Charlie's theodolite, and answered his purpose as well as one that would cost two hundred dollars.

"Well done, my boy," said Ben, who had watched the operation with great interest. "That's a capital application of the principle that the two sides of a right-angled triangle are equal."

"I could have hit it exactly if I had brought a plumb line, to have taken a true level of the base."

The reason that Charlie made the perpendicular stick longer than the other was, that he might get his eye down to sight at the trunk of the tree; otherwise he must have dug a hole in the ground.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## HARD-SCRABBLE.

IN a few days after the occurrences related in the previous chapter, Peterson came to Captain Rhines, declaring that he could by no means consent to be passed by in the sail-making; that no one in the place felt more interest in his young captain than himself; for had he not taught him seamanship? and that his old woman could weave with the best of them.

“Indeed, James,” said the captain, “Luce shall have all the cloth to weave that she wants; you shall help make the sails and rig, and we reckon upon you to calk her.”

Charlie continued to work with his small crew till the first of May, when, the days being long and the weather warm, he recalled his hands, and the work went on apace. Not having conveniences, as at present, to bring the plank to the timbers, when they came to bend the ceiling-plank at the bow and stern, they spiked two pieces of plank



across the butts of a couple of elms that grew side by side; then taking the plank hot from the steam-box, they put the end of it under one plank and over the others. Four or five men then took hold of it, while Charlie struck on it with the edge of his broadaxe, whang! when the men would bear down, and bend the plank, then he would strike in another place. This was to make it bend by cutting it part way off, just as joiners sometimes saw scarfs in a board when they want it to bend, as in building a front-yard fence at the corner of a street, only the joiner saws on the inside, and, when he bends his board, the scarf closes up; whereas, they cut on the outside, and when the plank was brought to, the cuts gaped, and the plank was no stronger for the wood between.

They did not make any tar. Fred contrived a method to obtain it much cheaper than they could have made it, and leave a handsome profit for himself—a twofold advantage, as he was obliged to take the money expended on the vessel from his business, which was a great detriment. He needed every cent to buy goods, as his business was increasing, and he would not buy on credit, although Mr. Welch was ready to trust him.

But as the lack of means tended directly to

develop the mechanical ability of John and Charlie, by compelling contrivance and effort, thus did it sharpen the wits of Fred. He bought potash for half money, half goods; fish for all store pay, or one fourth money, thus making a profit on his goods; sent the potash and fish to Boston, sold them for cash, and bought tow, cotton cloth, and shoes, for negro clothing. He filled the *Perseverance* up with these articles, and a cheaper quality of fish; paid Ben out of his store for the boat; went captain himself, with Peterson for pilot and sailing-master, Sydney Chase and young Peterson as crew; bartered his cargo in Carolina for tar, pitch, turpentine, and corn, and came back to Boston; sold part of the corn, and all the tar, pitch, and turpentine he did not want for the vessel, for cash, bought a stock of goods to bring home with him, and ground the corn in his own mill.

“That,” said Captain Rhines, delighted, “is what I call a calculation.”

The vessel was completed in August, and launched the 29th of September, the very day Charlie was twenty-one. In addition to building the vessel, they had, in the mean time, cleared all the growth from the land on which they cut their timber, burnt over and fenced it for Ben; also

helped him cut his hay and hoe his corn. Built of pine, and now well seasoned, she was as light on the water as a cork.

The whole town came to the launching, for all were interested in her, even Parson Goodhue, with his new hat and wig; but he kept a respectful distance from the gander. There was much diversity of opinion among the owners in respect to a name. Some wanted to call her Charlie Bell; but Charlie declared she looked too bad to be named for anybody. Some wanted to call her the Pioneer, others, Enterprise.

"I'll tell you what to call her," said Joe Griffin. "You've had such a hard scratch to build her, and ain't done scratching yet, call her Hard-Scrabble."

This was unanimously assented to. It had, indeed, been a hard scrabble, and the conflict was by no means ended. The boys feared the worst was to come. She was to be fitted for sea.

Charlie was certainly right in saying that she looked too bad to be named for anybody, though it was allowed on all hands that she was an excellent model, true in all her proportions, and not a bunch or a slack place could be found anywhere. Yet she was rough as rough could be. Even then it was customary to plane the wales and bulwarks,

and paint them black, with a turpentine streak, and the spars were generally painted black. But the wales of the Hard-Scrabble were just as the adze left them, although with the narrow adze, used in those days, the timber was left much smoother than after the wider ones now in use. The men were also skilful dubbers. The deck beams, which are now planed and smoothed with sand-paper, they left rough; but then they dubbed them, without breaking their chip, the whole length of the beam, leaving a succession of little ridges, which were thought very fine; and there are not many workmen at the present day can do that: as for bulwarks, she had none.

Aft she had a high quarter-deck, about twenty feet long, under which were the accommodations, where a fireplace was built, the cooking done, and all hands lived, the men being separated from the officers by a bulkhead. When she was loaded, this would be the only dry place in her, as the lower deck would be at the water's edge, perhaps under water.

A pole, called a rough tree, was run along from forward to aft, and fastened to stanchions to prevent falling overboard. The top timbers, however, came up all along, and there was a short rail at the

bows, and all along the quarter-deck; also some heavy pieces of white oak, made to run across the vessel in several places, with a mortise in the ends, which slipped over the heads of the top timbers above the deck load, giving great support to the upper works, as the waist was deep. The deck was as rough as it came from the saw; not a board about the cabin, inside or out, was planed, except where it was necessary to make a joint.

As Charlie had predicted, there was not a brushful of paint on her, except that the name was put on the bare white plank with lampblack and oil, instead of chalk, as he thought would be the case. Her wales looked the funniest. They could not afford pitch to go all over her, so they only put it on the seams; and, as the plank were not painted, she looked queer enough with a white stripe and a black one. They wanted to economize pitch for the bottom, which must have a solid coat of pitch and brimstone, to prevent the worms from eating her up in the West Indies. Into this pitch they put some of the yellow ochre, which the boys got on their excursion to Indian camp-ground. The knees were but half bolted; there was not a butt-bolt in her; the butts were merely spiked; spruce limbs took the place of bolts.

Captain Rhines said she would do well enough to go one voyage or two, till she earned something, and they could put in fastenings when they were better able.

She had neither figure nor billet-head, only a gammon knee. In short, with her handsome proportions and fine model, she appeared like a well-built man in most vile apparel.

The cloth for the sails now began to come in, and the bolts were piled up in the corn-house. In consequence of all this hard work, contrivance, and pinching economy in every direction, she stood them at the wharf, with her mast in and spars made, twelve dollars per ton.

The canvas and remaining expense, which they were now able to estimate, they found would be about one thousand five hundred dollars. Their money was nearly all expended; but they had paid their bills as they went along, and the vessel was in the water. They could now do but little more in the way of saving, as they could not turn in their own labor, but must have cash. They therefore put their heads together to devise means for raising it.

Captain Rhines and Ben both offered them the money to fit her for sea; but, to their astonishment,

they refused it. The captain endeavored in vain to prevail on them to permit him to lend them the money.

“Just think of it, John! Here is this vessel lying idle at the wharf, and you are losing the interest of what she cost you, and it will be another year before you can earn the money, and rig her. Before that time, you might send her to the West Indies, and make her pay for herself. Ben and I will charter and load her the moment she’s ready for sea; we’ll let Seth Warren take her, and go out to the West Indies this winter.”

“But, father, the cloth for the sails ain’t made.”

“There’s enough done for the mainsail: you wouldn’t want to go out there till the middle of January, so as to come on the coast in good weather; the cloth will be ready by that time. Ben, Peterson, and I can go right to work on the mainsail.”

“But we built her for Isaac; he owns a quarter of her, and I shouldn’t like to have him come home and find we had taken another into our concern, and sent him off with his vessel; then, if the man should have bad luck, he certainly wouldn’t like it.”

“Then I’ll go myself. I don’t think Isaac would object to my having been in her, especially if he found she had paid for herself.”

Mrs. Rhines made a sign to John to remain firm; for of all things she dreaded, it was her husband's going to sea.

"Father," said John, at length, "you are real kind and good; but we solemnly agreed, when we were all together, to build this vessel ourselves, and not to run in debt. I can't break that pledge, especially in the absence of one of the contracting parties. I don't think it would be right."

"No more it wouldn't. I didn't know that, but thought it was only a boyish notion of yours."

"If we are *losing* interest, we are not *paying* interest: we don't owe for her."

It required more money to rig her, in proportion to the cost of the hull, than it would in ordinary cases, they had economized so much on the hull, she being only half fastened, and no expense having been laid out for finish or paint.

Fred calculated to raise his money by some smart stroke in business: he had no other way. John and Charlie had many plans under consideration. Charlie could build boats, John could go to work at Portland, or, as they wanted to be together, Charlie could go to Stroudwater.

But it was now October. Isaac would be at home in a year: they could not in that time earn



money enough to fit her for sea, and they wanted to be able to load her with lumber from Charlie's land, as Ben did the Ark.

After looking at the matter in every possible light, and puzzling their heads to make something out of nothing, this committee of ways and means determined to go and consult with Uncle Isaac.

After stating the case fully to him, Charlie said,—

“Suppose John goes to Portland, and I to Stroudwater, to work, and while I'm gone this winter, get Joe Griffin to cut the wood off of Indian Island, and put it on the bank, send it to Boston or Salem, that, with what we could both earn, would, I think, with what we shall save by having the canvas and sails made at home, fetch us out. If I should ever go on my place to live, I should want a sheep pasture; and that would make a nice one if it was cleared. I could keep sheep there: in the winter they could live on kelp, rock-weed, and thatch round the shores, with a very little hay, as father's do on Griffin's Island.”

“I shouldn't want to do that: you'd have to give Joe fifty cents for cutting and putting it on the bank. It would bring nine shillings in Boston: that wouldn't leave you more than two hundred and fifty dollars, at the outside.”

“Yes; but it’s going to take me almost a year to earn that in a shipyard, and I can be earning all the time while they are cutting the wood.”

“If you cut the wood off that island, which lies right off the mouth of your harbor, and shelters it from the winds, it will leave it much exposed. It isn’t large enough to make much of a sheep pasture: you can’t keep sheep there in winter; for, besides there not being dulse, Irish moss, and kelp, as there is on Griffin’s, and the outer islands, the bay freezes in the winter, and the wolves would go over on the ice and kill them. I wouldn’t cut it off, and expose my harbor, for anything.”

“Potash brings cash: couldn’t I cut the white oaks and rock maples at the shore, and make potash?”

“What a way that would be!—to cut down good ship timber and sugar trees, that would make keels for ships, burn them up for potash, and that is the end of it. If we get to building vessels here, you will want it all for ship timber, because it is right on the spot. Let the folks back in the country, where ship timber isn’t worth anything, burn it up for potash: that would be saving at the tap and losing at the bung-hole.”

“But I shall never build another vessel if I don’t get this one done, and I want the money.”

“I see what you want,—to raise the money quicker than you can earn it in the yard or shop, and be together, too. You’d be willing to do almost anything to bring that about.”

“That’s it, exactly, Uncle Isaac,” said John.

“Well, then, listen to me. You’ve got money enough to buy the bolt-rope for your sails—haven’t you?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Well, then, start right off for Portland and Stroudwater as fast as you can go. Don’t lose a minute. Send down the bolt-rope and twine for Captain Rhines and Ben to make the sails with at their leisure. Be back here by Christmas; and you, Joe Griffin, and myself will go back to the Canada line, spend the winter, and hunt bears, beavers, otters, and moose. If we don’t get furs enough to bring you out clear, and something more, then my name ain’t Isaac Murch.”

The boys listened, with staring eyes and open mouths, till he concluded, then making a rush, both caught him round the neck.

“Just what we’ve always been longing to do!” said Charlie. “Just what we’ve been talking, dreaming about, and telling we meant to do some time.”

The boy-nature, which had been in abeyance a long time, and kept down by hard work and anxiety, was all up now, fresh and blithe as May.

“How glad I am we got stuck!” said Charlie. “Now we’ll make money, and have a good time, both together. O, I wish Fred could go!”

“But will Joe go?” asked John.

“Will he eat when he’s hungry? He’s almost as well acquainted as I am. He’s been logging and hunting up that way. He saw a hunter last week, that came out of the woods because his folks were sick. He’s a great friend of Joe’s, and told him of places where the beavers are getting ready to build their houses, and where the moose are going to make a yard, and said, as he couldn’t go into the woods this winter, he would lend him his steel traps. I’ve got a few traps, and know where I can hire a few more, and we must make up the number we lack with dead-falls. I’ll make snow-shoes for you and John, and arrange everything. We can’t start without snow, and therefore if there’s no snow when you come home, we must wait till there is.”

“But,” asked John, “can’t we hunt round here?”

“Yes, indeed. Kill bears and wolves, and get the bounty — anywhere within fifty miles.”

“Perhaps,” said John, “we shan’t have to come to the wooden shrouds, after all.”

“I hope we shan’t. I didn’t think we should,” said Charlie.

Thus encouraged, the boys started off for Portland in exuberant spirits, having first made an arrangement with Fred that he should employ Ricker and the Eatons to cut logs enough on Charlie’s land to make one hundred and seventy-five thousand of boards, begin to haul them to the mill on the first snow, in order to have them seasoning, to load the Hard-Scrabble.

“We thought Fred wouldn’t have so good a chance as ourselves,” said Charlie, “because, not being a carpenter nor blacksmith, he couldn’t turn in his work, but he’s turned in his goods. He sent those poor hake, that nobody here could eat, out South to feed the negroes, and got pitch, turpentine, and corn. He’ll pay for most of the flax, and for the weaving, in goods. He’s taken a good many orders since we’ve been building. He’ll pay the Eatons for cutting and hauling the timber, and the mill men for sawing, from the store. He won’t get much out of Ricker only

his tobacco; so I shouldn't wonder if he didn't have to pay much money, after all."

"I guess," said John, "it will be you, and I, and Isaac that will have to pay the money. His goods will come to more than our labor."

## CHAPTER XIX.

## PLEASURE AND PROFIT.

It is the latter part of December, just before sunset. The snow, which had fallen in successive storms since the first of the month, now lay deep on the ground. Making their way in Indian file through the forest are four persons, in whom we recognize Uncle Isaac, Joe Griffin, Charlie, and John. They are each of them harnessed to a singular sort of a vehicle, called in hunters' phrase "toboggin," by long thongs of deer-skin, which are put across the breast, and secured to the neck by another strap to prevent their slipping down, like the breastplate of a horse. The vehicle consists of a cedar board, eight feet long and eighteen inches wide, quarter of an inch thick, made perfectly smooth, and the forward end bent up like the nose of a sled, some bars put across to strengthen it, to which to fasten the load. This formed the lightest sled imaginable, being so long, in proportion to its width, as to receive but little

obstruction from the snow. The forward part, bent up, glided easily over the drifts or logs, and it was withal so thin, that it bent, and accommodated itself to the inequalities of the surface. Upon the sledges they carry their rifles, powder, balls, and buckshot, steel-traps, blankets, and a small kettle, pork, bread, and parched corn, a large file, whetstone, axe, and other necessaries, including a frow (a large knife) for splitting shingles. They wear moccasins and snow-shoes; in their belts a knife and hatchet. Each man also has a horn of tinder, flint, steel, and brimstone matches.

The boys were evidently weary with their unaccustomed work, and Charlie cast many a furtive glance towards the setting sun, the light of which shone red through the trees. It was also evident that even Joe was not unaffected by fatigue; but upon the seasoned frame of Uncle Isaac the journey apparently made no impression.

"There ought to be a brook somewhere about here," said he. "Ah! I see the place. It's just beyond that hemlock, though the water itself is all covered with ice and snow. We'll camp there. We ought to have camped two hours ago, but I wanted to reach this spot."

This was the first experience of real camp and



hunter's life the boys had ever known. To be sure they had camped out in summer, on Smutty Nose and in other places; but now it was bitter cold, and the snow two feet deep. They were also tired. Uncle Isaac, taking counsel only of his own toughened sinews, had not made sufficient allowance for the little practice they had ever known in snow-shoe walking. Their shoulders ached with the cutting of the straps, and their feet from the pressure of the snow-shoes. Their loads, light at first, grew heavier every mile.

As they looked around upon the trees covered with snow, their loads white with frost, realized that they were in a wilderness, no house within thirty miles, they began to feel that the hunting, to which they had looked forward with such rapturous anticipations, had its rough as well as its romantic side. The place where they had halted was in a heavy growth of hard wood, largely mixed with hemlock, which, in the gathering twilight of the short winter day, with their long branches, gave a peculiar black and gloomy appearance to the spot in the eyes of Charlie and John; but not so with the others.

“What a glorious place for a camp!” said Joe, going up to a large hemlock, which had been

turned up by the wind the year before, which made, with its great roots matted together and filled with frozen earth, an impenetrable barrier against the north-west wind, blowing keen and cold; "and here is something to warm us," taking his axe from the sled, and attacking with vigorous blows a large beech, that stood with its dead, dry branches extended to the wintry sky.

Uncle Isaac and the boys now took off their snow-shoes, and with them scraped off the snow around the stump to the ground; then, cutting some crotched poles, set them up in the snow, trod it around to keep them steady, then putting other poles into the crotches, rested their ends on the top of the stump, thus forming rafters, and over them threw brush, till they made it all tight, leaving a hole in the centre for the smoke to go out; then covered the floor thickly with hemlock branches, and flung their blankets on it. By this time Joe had the tree cut up. They first carried the large logs into the camp, then brought along the smaller limbs and dry twigs, adding them to the pile.

Meanwhile Uncle Isaac and John collected a whole armful of birch bark from the trees, and kindled it. In a moment the fire, catching the

great mass of dry wood, streamed through the hole in the top of the camp, and glancing upon the dark masses of hemlocks, lit up the faces of the group, as they stood around the fire, with a ruddy glow, and changed the whole character of the scene as by enchantment.

The next morning they broke camp, and travelled till noon, camped, and rested during the remainder of the day. Next morning, being refreshed by rest, and well seasoned to their work, they started before daylight, and travelled through a dense forest till Saturday noon, when they came to a place where fires had destroyed the growth of trees many years before, and the land was overrun with bushes, alternating with clear spots. Its northern edge was broken into gentle hills and vales.

While eating dinner, they espied some deer on the side of one of the hills, browsing among the young growth that had come up after the fire, and scraping away the snow with their feet to get at the dead grass.

A fresh breeze was blowing and roaring in the tree tops, which would conceal the noise of their approach. It was evident that the deer did not see them, as they had not yet emerged from the

wood, and had instantly lain down on seeing the deer. The wind was also blowing directly from the animals, so that they could not scent them.

There were clumps of bushes, thickly matted, with large open spaces between them. Those nearest to the deer were within gunshot; but the difficulty lay in crossing the open spaces, as they would have to do so in sight of the herd. But Uncle Isaac said if Charlie and John would remain where they were, he and Joe would surprise them.

He then cut a parcel of pine boughs, and tied them all around Joe's head, Joe in turn doing the same for him; so that when they got down on the snow, which was hard enough to bear them, they, at a distance, resembled a bush. Then they crawled along, watching the deer, remaining motionless when they saw them looking towards them; but when they turned from them to feed, crawled on till they reached a clump of bushes. Charlie and John watched them with breathless attention as they entered the last clump of bushes. It seemed to them an age after they disappeared from sight; still they heard nothing. The deer now began to manifest distrust. The leader raised his head and snuffed the air. The greater part of them began to move their tails violently, and left

off feeding. At that moment the report of the rifles was heard, the leader fell down in his tracks, and another, after two or three leaps, fell on his knees, when Joe, rushing to his side, drew his knife across his throat.

They were now highly elated, as they had provisions enough for a long time. Hanging the carcasses in trees, to prevent the wolves from getting them, they pressed on, in order to reach a suitable place to camp before night.

Long before dark, they arrived at a place pronounced by Uncle Isaac to be just the thing: it was a great precipice of rock, that rose, for the most part, perpendicular to the height of twelve or fifteen feet, but in one place jugged over very much, forming quite a cave at its base, filled with stones of no great size, that had fallen from the precipice, and lay buried beneath the snow. They cut a lot of dry and green limbs and bushes, and threw into this cavity, and then set them on fire, which melted all the snow, and warmed the whole cliff. Then they rolled out the scattering rocks, and had a floor on one side, and a roof overhead of stone. They now cut some long poles, and leaned them against the precipice, leaving a hole for the smoke, and covered them with brush.

There was a crack in the ledge, into which Uncle Isaac drove a stake, and affixed a crotch to it, to hang the kettles on. As the morrow was the Sabbath, an extra quantity of wood was to be prepared; the camp being so high and large, they put a good portion of it inside.

While Uncle Isaac and Joe were doing this, and making all snug, the boys unloaded one of the sledges, and went back after the deer.

It was a glorious camp: the rock retained the heat received from the fire; they had plenty of venison, and now rested, and laid plans for the future. That night, at twelve o'clock, began a most furious snow storm; but little did they heed it in their snug camp, with plenty to eat, and a rousing fire. The snow drifting over the camp made it all the warmer.

The storm continued two days, clearing off with a high wind, and they remained in camp three days.

Just after noon on the following Saturday, Uncle Isaac informed them that they were in the vicinity of the river, upon a feeder of which they expected to find the beavers. Joe told them there was an old logging camp near by: they found the walls of the old camp (which was built of very large

logs) as good as ever; but the roof had fallen in. The deacon's seat, as it is called (made of a plank hewed from a stick of timber, and which is always placed beside the fire in logging camps), being well preserved with grease and smoke, still remained. It was but a light labor for so many skilful hands to repair the roof, scrape out part of the snow, and cover the remainder with brush.

After supper, during which Joe had been uncommonly silent, he sat upon the deacon's seat, his arms folded upon his breast, and looking intently into the fire.

This was so contrary to his usual custom (as he was always the life of the camp-fire, with his merry laugh), that they all gazed upon him with astonishment, and Uncle Isaac was just about to ask if he was sick, when he broke the silence by saying, "This camp seems very natural to me; but it calls up many different feelings: every inch of this ground is familiar to me, though I haven't been on it, till I came here summer before last with the surveyors, for ten years. I was just turned of seventeen, a great, strapping boy, like John here, when Richard Clay, who was foreman of the scout that was going into the woods, persuaded my father to let me go with them. Father was very

loath to consent; he said I was too young for such work; that I was a great, overgrown boy, and, though large and smart, had not got my strength, and it might strain and hurt me for life; that he had known many such instances. But Richard hung on, saying he would see that I did not overdo. The gang was made up of our neighbors, and young men, with all of whom I was acquainted, and I was crazy to go. Dick offered me high wages; father was poor, and wanted the money; I coaxed mother, and got her on my side; finally we prevailed, and wrung it out of father, and I went. Well, as you may suppose, taking care of me didn't amount to a great deal. Dick wanted to get all the logs cut he could, and I wanted no favors, and it was just who could do the most; but I was naturally tough, though I had grown fast; for we were very poor when I was a boy, and I had lived hard; my bones were made of Indian corn, which I shall always think is the best stuff to make bones of."

"That's so," said Uncle Isaac, by way of parenthesis.

Without heeding the interruption, Joe went on. "Well, as I was saying, we were poor: father was clearing up his farm; I had a natural turn to an



axe, and had been used to falling and chopping ever since I was fifteen years old, and, boy as I was, could hold play with most men. Uncle Isaac, you knew Sam Apthorp?"

"O, yes, very well; and a fine young man he was."

"Well," continued Joe, "the Apthorps were our neighbors. John Apthorp, Sam's father, began his clearing at the same time with mine; they cut their first tree the same day. Sam was several years older than I, and a powerful, smart fellow. He took a great liking to me, and taught me about hunting, trapping, and many other things, for he was a master hunter; and as for me, I almost worshipped him: it was for the sake of being with him that made me so anxious to go. Sam and I, Dick Clay, and another by the name of Rogers, came up here in August to build a camp, cut hay, and look out the timber. O, what a happy time that was to me, though it was the worst and hardest work I ever did before or since! It was all new to me, and wild. That swale below where we shot the deer hadn't any bushes on it then, for it was all covered with grass as high as your shoulder; there is a brook runs through it, and the beaver had dammed and flowed it, killing all the trees, I

suppose, a thousand years before; and then the Indians, or somebody else, had broken the dam, killed the beaver, let the water out, and the grass had come in; you can see the old dam there yet. Well, we came up to cut this hay: it was hot—scorching hot—not a breath of wind; for it was all surrounded with woods except a little gap, where the brook ran into the river, and that was filled with alders, and such like. The black flies and mosquitos were awful: the only way we could live was to grease ourselves; but that only lasted a little while, for the hot sun, and the heat of our bodies sweating, would soon take it off, and then they would come worse than ever. We came up in a bateau, cut the hay, and stacked it up for our oxen the next winter. O, how natural everything here looks! There is not a log I helped cut and roll up but has a memory belonging to it. This seat we are sitting on Sam and I hewed out; we cut the sapling within three feet of the door, and there are our names, which he cut on it one Sabbath morning; right in that corner we slept side by side for two long winters; many a rousing meal we've eat, and many a merry evening we've spent around the fire; many's the deer we've shot and the beavers we've trapped together here. Poor

Sam! He had found a bear's den, and we'd made a plan for all hands to leave off work early in the afternoon, and go and take them. All the evening before we were sitting round the fire, I on that seat and Sam in that corner, stretched out on the brush, with his boots off, and his feet to the fire. We were all laughing and talking, telling how we would get them, and what we would do with them; and Sam said he would carry a cub home, learn it to dance, and go to Boston with it, as he had read about their doing in the old country, and make his everlasting fortune out of it. Sam Chesley, our old cook, was rubbing his hands, and telling, in high life, what steaks he'd fry, and how he would cook it; and we agreed to cast lots for the skin, on expectation, before we had got the bears, or even seen them. We little thought, in our happiness, what was in store for us. The next day, about ten o'clock, Sam and I fell a large pine; it had more top than such pines commonly have; it came down between two big hemlocks, breaking their branches, and clearing the way as it went. A large limb, that we didn't see, lodged in the thick top of the hemlock; and as Sam went under it, to cut off the top log, the second blow he struck, down came the limb, as swift and silent as the

lightning, and struck him on the head and shoulders, crushing him dead to the ground! He never spoke or moved; when I got to him he was dead. It was only a week before we were to break camp, and go home. Sam and I had often, during the last month, talked of the good times we would have when we got home, — and then to bury him, without a prayer or sermon, in the wilderness! We had nothing to make a coffin, and so we took two barrels that we had emptied of pork, and put his head and shoulders in one, and the lower part of his body in the other, and then fastened them together, and buried him in his clothes, beneath that great blazed pine that stands on the bank. It was the first real sorrow I ever had. I had never seen or thought anything of death before, and this almost broke me down. I was through here, as I told you, visited the grave, and saw the camp, though I didn't go into it; but it didn't make me feel as it does to sit here on this very bench where I have sat with him, and see his name cut on it, and the very place where we used to sleep —” And hiding his face in his hand, he burst into tears. There was not a dry eye in the group.

“We didn't stay but a week after this,” contin-

ued Joe; "we couldn't work with any heart, any of us; we never molested the bears, and were glad to get away from the spot; nothing went right; we lamed one of the oxen, one man cut himself real bad, and we had sad news to carry home; for they never heard a word till we came in the spring."

The next day being Sunday, they remained in camp.

## CHAPTER XX.

## CAMPING.

MONDAY morning it was splendid walking on the crust; they made a long day's march, travelling till dark. Making a fire at the root of a tree, they flung some brush on the snow, and laid down in their blankets in the open air to sleep. Continuing to follow the bank of the little stream, they started some moose about ten o'clock in the day; the crust would bear them, but not the moose, who broke through at every step, staining the snow with their blood. In those days moose were more abundant in Maine than any other part of New England. Pursuing them till sundown, they succeeded in capturing one, and camped on the trail. In the morning, resuming the pursuit, they soon came in sight of the herd, but such is the power of this animal, that, notwithstanding the advantage which snow-shoes gave the men, it was the middle of the afternoon before they came up with them, and succeeded in killing four more. Re-

linquishing the pursuit, which now promised to lead them in a different direction from that in which they wished to go, they dressed the moose, hung him on the trees out of the reach of wolves, and wrapping themselves in the skins, laid down on the snow to sleep.

“Joe,” said Uncle Isaac, “how far do you judge we are from the spot the young man told you of?”

“I reckon about a mile.”

“Well, I hunted over some of this ground twenty years ago, with the Indians, off to the east’rd, and then again to the north’rd of us, where there are many ponds, some of them having outlets one into the other. Suppose, while we are cooking some breakfast, you put on your snow-shoes and take a look, and, if you think best, we’ll make a permanent camp somewhere hereabouts; and as we’ve got to live in it a good while, we’ll make it well.”

In a short time Joe returned, saying, “I found the place, and there are beavers enough.”

They immediately set about building their camp, and determined to make it as home-like and comfortable as possible. It was made of logs, from which all the knots and bunches were trimmed, and the crevices between them stuffed with moss from the trees.

Since they had come on the snow with sledges, they were enabled to bring a great deal more weight than if they had set out before the snow came, as, in addition to the sledges, they also carried light packs, and moreover intended to build canoes, and return in the spring by the river.

Uncle Isaac, thoroughly versed in wood-craft, and always thoughtful, had brought an auger, draw-shave, and a small saw on his sledge.

They split out cedar shingles, with the frow, four feet long, fastening them to the rafters and pur-lins, with poles held down with wooden pins and withes. Upon these they put brush to break the dash of the rain, and prevent the rain and snow from being driven by force of the wind under the shingles, as they intended it for a permanent camp, in which to leave furs and provisions during their absence on trapping and hunting excursions. They made a solid door of cedar plank, hung on wooden hinges, a deacon's seat, and a rack around the sides, covered with hemlock and cedar brush, for bedsteads.

"We ought to have a stool or two," said Uncle Isaac; "we want something we can move round; we can't move the deacon's seat, and we can't move the fire."



He cut down a spruce that had long straight limbs' and cut some chunks from the top three feet long, leaving a sufficient number of limbs on each side for legs; he split the pieces in halves, and smoothed the split side with a draw-shave.

"There," said he, setting it up before the wondering boys, "there's a backwoodsman's stool: them are legs won't want any gluing, and if anybody wants a cushion, they can put some moss on it."

While Uncle Isaac was at work on the stools, Charlie, Joe, and John were splitting out boards to make a table.

"The first stormy day that comes," said Uncle Isaac, "I'll make some bark dishes, and the rest of you can make some spoons, and we'll have some shelves; it's just as well to be comfortable. There's just one thing we do want desperately; that is, a fireplace, to keep the fire from spreading all over the camp, taking up so much room, and also a chimney, instead of a hole in the roof."

"We can build a fireplace of green logs," said Joe.

"Yes, but it will burn out in a short time."

"I wonder if we couldn't find some rocks or clay somewhere; or is everything froze fast?"

"I don't believe but by cutting a little ice, we

could find stones, and clay too, in the river. It don't freeze hard here in the woods, as it does out in the clear."

The snow had come that year before the ground froze, and under the bank of the stream they found clay and flat stones, of which they built a fire-place, and the chimney of sticks of wood and clay.

"There's no end to wants," said Uncle Isaac; "now I want some birch-bark dishes."

"You'll have to give that up," said John, "for the bark won't run."

"Won't it? I'll make it run."

He warmed a birch tree with hot water, and made the bark run as well as in the spring.

"Now get me some spruce roots, Charlie, and in evenings and rainy days we'll make the dishes."

As they expected to hunt and trap over a large extent of ground, they travelled about ten miles farther on, and built a rough shanty in among several ponds and small streams, where they expected to find beavers, and placed in it some provisions; then they took the back track, seven or eight miles from the permanent camp, and built another on the bank of the river, where they expected to find otter and mink. They dignified the middle one with the name of the home camp; that among the lakes

they called the shanty, and the other the river camp.

“We ought to have come up and done all this before snow came,” said Uncle Isaac; “but now we must do the best we can; perhaps we shall blunder into good luck; people do sometimes. There would have been a hundred beavers where there is one, if it had not been for the French and English.”

“Why so?” asked Joe.

“Because, when the French held Canada, they put the Indians up to breaking the dams and destroying the beaver, to spite the English; and now the English have got Canada, they do the same, to spite us. An Indian, of his own accord, won't destroy game, any more than a farmer would destroy his seed-corn: when they break into a beaver house, they always throw back the young ones, and part of the old, to breed; but a white man takes the whole, because he's afraid, if he don't, the next white trapper will.”

Beavers are industrious and provident, not, like other animals that live by the chase and the slaughter of other creatures, subject to a lack of food; they are protected in their houses from violence, and are so prolific, that, notwithstanding the mer-

ciless warfare waged upon them, by which they had been driven from the sea-coasts even at that early day, they were still abundant in those wilds whither our adventurers had followed them. The beaver is about three feet in length, averaging in weight sixty pounds; its tail is a foot in length, flat, and covered with scales; the feet and legs flat and short, with a membrane between the toes; it has very strong and large cutting teeth, the upper ones two and a half inches long, and the lower ones three inches: with these teeth they will cut down a tree eight inches through; and if a tree stands in just the right place, and they want it very much, they won't hesitate to cut it if it is a foot through. When the beavers are two years old, they build houses, and set up for themselves, as they don't like to live on their parents. They breathe air, and therefore cannot live a long time under water; neither can they live without having constant access to the water; they are, therefore, compelled to build in water so deep that it will not freeze at the bottom; the entrance is under water: by diving beneath the ice, they can get at the lily-roots on the bottom of the pond, and also obtain access to holes in the bank, which they provide for retreat in the event of being disturbed in their houses.

They feed on the wood and bark of trees, which they cut down and sink in front of their houses, in order to obtain it in the winter.

Their houses are built of branches of trees, mud, and stones, from two to six or eight feet in thickness, and, when frozen hard, bid defiance to all attacks, save those of man. They have an elevated platform in them, above the surface of the water, on which they sleep. They break the ice every night, opposite their holes in the bank, for a breathing-hole, thus keeping it open, that in pleasant days they may go into the woods. They often build in a pond, but generally prefer to dam a brook, and make their own pond; then, when they want wood to repair their houses or dams, or for provision in winter, they can make a raft up stream and, getting on to it, float down with the stream, steering with their paws.

After completing their camp, and making all their arrangements, they approached the spot, and perceived that the animals had dammed a large brook. In the midst of the pond thus formed, surrounded by snow and ice, which covered them nearly to their tops, were twelve large beaver houses. All was still as death: the sun shone clear on the snow-covered houses, beneath which,

in a half-torpid state, the beavers were reposing, most effectually sheltered from the cold and from beasts of prey. Safe beneath the ice was their winter supply of food: all they had to do when hungry was to go a few feet, and obtain it.

The party walked carefully over the ice, and Uncle Isaac pointed out to the boys the breathing-holes in it.

“Well,” he said, by way of summing up, “I reckon there are not less than a hundred beavers under this snow and ice, and likely to be more than less.”

“A hundred beavers!” cried John, in amazement.

“Yes; there’s ten in a house, old and young, I’ll warrant — not less than ten: I’ve seen twenty-five taken out of one house. They’re not ours yet, my boy!” slapping John on the shoulder.

“Be they good to eat?” asked Charlie.

“Nothing better, especially the tails. I call a singed beaver a dish to set before a king.”

“Why do they singe them?”

“You see, a beaver in the winter is as fat as a hog, and the fat lies on the outside; you want the skin, just as you do the rind of pork; so, if you can afford to singe the fur all off, and lose that, he will be just like a scalded hog. I’m in hopes we shall get enough to be able to singe at least one.”

In the course of the day they discovered three other beaver settlements, two of them in ponds made by damming up a brook, and the other in a large natural pond. They also discovered otter-slides and fishing-holes, where the otters fished a great quantity of muskrat, dens and tracks of minks along the river banks and brooks.

“Now,” said Uncle Isaac, “let us look for bears. I’ve seen signs, more or less, for the last two or three miles.”

“What are the signs, Uncle Isaac?” asked Charlie. “I don’t see any.”

Uncle Isaac smiled, and pointed to a clump of oaks and beeches on the side of the brook, the top limbs of which were all bent in, and many of them broken off.

“What do you suppose bent and broke all these limbs?”

“Why, the wind, or the snow, I suppose.”

“But neither the wind or the snow would bend them in; it would bend them down; but these are turned up, and bent in.”

“I’m sure I don’t know,” said Charlie. “What did?”

“Why, the bears.”

“The bears! What for?”

“Why, the bears live on acorns and beech-nuts; they go a-nutting, as well as boys, climb up into the top of a tree, just like a cat, and, when they’ve got as high as the limbs will bear, they sit down in the crotch of a large limb, reach out their paws, and pull the smaller limbs in, and eat off the beech-nuts and acorns; they will pull in and break off a limb as big as my arm. There have been plenty of bears round here late this fall. There are lots of them asleep under these old windfalls, and in hollow trees, and we must find them, and mark the trees; then we can get them when we like.”

They had not proceeded far in their search when Joe exclaimed, “I’ve found one!”

He was standing at the foot of an enormous elm, which, being hollow, had broken off about twenty feet from the ground.

“How do you know there is a bear there?” asked Charlie. “I don’t see any.”

At this all laughed, when Uncle Isaac pointed out to Charlie a regular line of grooves and scratches, extending from the bottom to the top of the tree, left by the bear’s claws, where it had gone up and down; he also told him that the bear went into his den in November, and remained asleep, without eating or coming out, till spring,



and that it was a she bear, because they always lived by themselves, and in trees, if hollow, or windfalls, if they could find them, to keep their young from the wolves and the males; that if there was a bear there, she probably had cubs, perhaps four, but at least two; perhaps eight, for if she had two litters in one year, she would make a den close by for the first cubs; both litters follow her the next summer, and the next winter all live together. They generally weigh from three to four hundred.

They found many more dens under windfalls, and the roots of trees, and sides of rocks, for the bear is so well protected by his thick coat as to be nearly insensible to cold, and will content himself very well, with a little brush for a bed, under the side of a root that has been turned up, or a rock, though the female will seek out a hollow tree. They discovered the dens either by scratches on the stubs, or by noticing where the breath of the bear had stained and melted the snow.

Having marked all the places, in order to find them again, they returned to the home camp.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## UNCLE ISAAC'S BEAR STORY.

AFTER supper they sat around the fire consulting as to future movements. Bears were very abundant in those days.

In 1783 no fewer than ten thousand five hundred bear-skins were sent to England from the northern ports of America.

In 1805, eleven years subsequent to the date of our story, the number had reached twenty-five thousand.

"It is going to be a great deal of work," said Uncle Isaac, "to get these beavers now. The ice is thick in the pond, the houses are seven or eight feet thick, and frozen as hard as a stone. It will be hard work to break them up—a great deal of ice to cut, and frozen dirt. If we dull our tools, we've nothing but a file to sharpen them with. I think we'd better make a lot of dead-falls and box-traps, and set them for minks and sables, cut holes in the ice, and set steel-traps for the beaver and

otters; and while we are tending them, go into the muskrats, coons, and bears, till the weather begins to get warmer; then the sun will thaw the south side of their houses, and the ice in the ponds, and we can get what beavers are left with half the work. What do you think, Joseph?"

"I think just as you do; but we must have fish to bait the otter traps. I have got hooks and lines in my pack. We can also make nets of willow bark, and set them under the ice."

"Yes, and we can set for foxes. If we could get a silver-gray, it would be worth a lot of money."

"I thought of that, and have brought some honey. That will tole them. A fox loves honey as well as a bear; so does a coon, and a coon is out every thawy day. I count heavy on bears. A bear's pelt is worth forty shillings; and we may find a yard of deer. Just as soon as we begin to have carcasses of beaver and fish round, it will draw the foxes, and we can trap and shoot them on the bait."

Uncle Isaac now brought out his pack, and began to remove some of the contents, laying them one by one on the table, while the boys looked on with great curiosity. The first thing he took out was a bunch of the largest sized mackerel hooks.

“What in the world did you bring them clear up here for?” asked John. “There are no mackerel here.”

“They are to make a wolf-trap.”

“How do you make it?”

“O, you’ll see.”

He next took two slim, pointed steel rods, nearly three feet long, from the outside of his pack, where they were fastened, as they were too long to go inside.

“What are those?” asked Charlie.

“Muskrat spears,” said Joe. “That will be fun alive for you boys.”

The next articles were three little bottles filled with some liquid.

“What are these?”

“That’s telling,” said Uncle Isaac, laying another vial on the table.

John removed the cork, and smelt of it. “That’s aniseseed. What’s it for?”

“To tole foxes and fishes.”

“What’s this?” — taking up another.

“That’s telling.”

“O, how it smells! — like rotten fish. What is it for?”

“To tole minks.”

“And this?” — taking up another.

“To tole beavers.”

“What is in this little bag?”

“If you must know, Mr. Inquisitive, it is some earth that I got from the place where Joe Bradish kept some foxes, and that they laid on all summer. I'm in hopes to get a silver or cross fox, with it.”

“Uncle Isaac, do give me some of that honey! — just the least little bit of a taste!”

“Well, I'll give you all just a taste; but I want it to tole foxes and coons.”

He gave them all a little on the point of his knife.

As they were going to devote much of their time to hunting bears, it was a matter of course that the habits and methods of taking that animal should, to a great extent, afford matter for conversation around the camp fire.

“A bear,” said Uncle Isaac, drawing up his knees, clasping his hands over them, and resting his chin upon them, as his habit was when he was about to tell a story, “is a singular critter.”

John threw some fresh fuel on the fire, and squatting down on the ground, with both arms on the deacon's seat, and his mouth wide open, sat

with his eyes riveted on the old hunter's face, drinking in every word, while Charlie and Joe Griffin disposed themselves in attitudes of attention.

"I don't," continued Uncle Isaac, "bear any malice against a bear, as I do against a wolf, though they have done me a deal of mischief in my day, because they are not a bloodthirsty animal. A wolf will bite the throats of a whole flock of sheep, just to suck their blood."

"Why, Uncle Isaac," said Joe, "didn't a bear kill little Sally Richards only last summer? and all they found of her was just her clothes, feet, and shoes? He had eaten all the rest of her up, and was gnawing her skull when they found and shot him; and wasn't she my own cousin?—pretty little bright creature as ever lived! I'm sure I should think that was being bloodthirsty."

"That was a she bear, and had cubs following her; and *then* they are savage; but at other times a bear will let you alone if you will let him alone. They will always turn out for a man. A woman might pick blueberries all day in a pasture with a bear, and if she let him alone he would let her alone. But if they have young ones, or are starving, or you pen them up, then look out! I've

heard the Indians say that in the fall, when they are fat and getting sleepy, you may put a stick in their mouths and lead them anywhere; and my mother has picked cranberries in a swamp with six bears, because she wanted the berries before they eat 'em all up, and they never meddled with her. Then they are such comical critters! Why, you can learn a bear anything. When I was a boy, I used to have a cub 'most every winter; and when, by the next fall, they began to be troublesome, and father would shoot them, I cried as if my heart would break.

“There was one,” said he, stirred by the recollections of his youth, unclasping his hands, rising up, turning round, then sitting down again, “that I loved better than all the rest. I used to call him Cæsar, after an old black slave who belonged to one of our neighbors. Father was a great hunter, and so were all the old folks, for they would have starved to death, when they first came, if it had not been for their rifles, and powder was so scarce they could not afford to waste shots. Well, one fall the frost cut off all the acorns, berries, and cranberries, so there was not a berry to be found. The bears were starving. They came down clear from Canada, and swarmed all along the salt water

after clams, lobster, flounders, and raccoons. O, I never knew the strength of a bear till then! Captain Rhines was a young man, and mate of a vessel then. My father, and a good many of the neighbors, had sent out fowls, and butter, and cheese, as a venture by him, and got molasses for it. Mr. Rhines, as he was then, had brought it down from Salem with his things, landed it at our point, rolled it up on the beach out of the tide's way, and left it till the owners could haul it off. It staid there a day or two. One morning father and Uncle Sam Edwards went to haul it up, when they found the head of every barrel smashed in, just as if it had been done with an axe. The bears, which, as I told you, were as thick as hops, had done it with their paws, and upset, eat, and wasted the whole of it. As they were going home, lamenting their hard luck, they met a bear — drunk! John Carver had put up a story-and-a-half log house the day before, and they had left a pailful of new rum, sweetened with molasses, sitting on some boards in the garret. This bear had smelt it, climbed up, and drank it all up. How he got down I don't know; but it operated so quick he couldn't get off, and there he was, all stuck over with molasses, where he had been with the rest of







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them down to the shore. He had got it all over his ears and breast, and the chips, where they had hewed the frame, all stuck to him, and he was the queerest sight you ever saw! He couldn't walk, but would sit up and look at us, and then roll over on one side, then get back again, and looked so comical, that notwithstanding their sorrow for their loss, they all burst out laughing; and Uncle Sam Edwards, who was a jolly, funny creetur himself, carried on so with him, and made such queer observations, that father laughed till he had to lie down on the ground. None of them had a gun, but they took the stakes out of the sleds, which they had brought to haul the molasses on, and pounded him on the head till they killed him. Uncle Sam, who himself drank a good deal more than was good for him, said, when he gave him the last blow, 'You see now what stealing and hard drinking will bring a bear to.' After skinning him, they had a long consultation as to whether he was fit to eat. Father said he didn't want to eat anything that died drunk; but Uncle Sam said he didn't die of liquor, for they had killed and bled him, and as for himself, he would eat him; so said John Carver; but father said he wouldn't; so they gave father the skin, and they took the meat.

Father carried the skin home, and mother washed and combed out the fur, and in the cold nights that winter she used to put it on my bed, and it is in our house yet.

“A bear is a master strong creature. To see what a rock they would turn over that fall to get a lobster! It was great fun to see the bears catch coons; they would go round till they saw two or three coons in a tree; one bear would climb the tree, and the coons, seeing him, would run clear up to the top, where the limbs were small, and wouldn't bear the weight of the bear; but the bear would follow as far as he could go, then shake off the coons, and the ones below would catch them; they would dig them out of holes, or crush up a log if it was rotten. They are bewitched after anything sweet, especially honey, and if they find a hive they will surely rob it.

“Old Mr. John Elwell, Sam's father, had a hive of bees: they swarmed, and took for the woods, and got on a tree; he followed them and hived them. There were two maple trees, that grew within three feet of each other; so he put a plank between them, and set a hive on it, meaning to carry them home in the fall, when it was cold and the bees got stiff.

“One night he was going after his cows, and thought he would take a look at the bees. He found the hive on the ground all stove to pieces; every drop of honey licked clean out of it. The bears had got well stung, for the bark was torn off the trees all around where they had bitten them in their rage and anger. But a bear is so covered with fur, that only a small part of him is exposed to the sting of the bees; and no matter how much anguish it causes them, they will have the honey.

“They plagued us terribly that fall; you couldn't get a wild grape, nor a choke-cherry, for them, and it kept us at work all the fall watching the cattle and corn, and setting spring-guns and dead-falls. There was one old she bear that father swore vengeance against. We had the sheep for safety in a log sheep-house in the yard, but she climbed over the fence, tore off the roof, and carried away the old ram. She had two white stripes on each side of her nose, and was well known; she had been hunted again and again, and once had been wounded by a spring-gun and tracked by the blood; but she could not be overtaken, nor could her den be found. We had six hogs that year, that lived in the pasture, and every day at low

water went a clamming. We had put them up for fear of the bears. One old sow was in a pen by herself, fattening. We were going to kill her in a week. We had just fed the cattle, and set down to supper, when we heard a terrible squealing, all the hogs squealing as if to see which could squeal the loudest, and the rooster crowing. We ran out. There was that old white-nosed bear, with the sow hugged up in her fore paws, walking off on her hind legs, just as easy as a man would walk with a baby. Father ran back, caught the gun out of the bracket, but before he could load, the bear was in the woods. It had got to be dark, and the old sow's cries could no more be heard. He raised the neighbors. They took firebrands and searched the woods; but the ground was froze too hard to find the trail, and so the bear got off with her booty. You may well think father was greatly enraged, not only at the loss of his property, but he was greatly vexed that so distinguished a hunter as he was should be thus insulted by a bear. He did nothing else but scour the woods for that bear, and as nearly all the neighbors had some cause of complaint against her, he had assistance enough, but all in vain. He had set a steel bear-trap, dead-falls, and spring-guns for her, but she

was too knowing to be caught. She sprung the steel-trap, which he had baited and covered up in chaff, by going all round the bait and trap in a circle, and thumping on the ground with her fore feet, coming nearer and nearer till she jarred it off.

“On the last of that winter there came a great thaw, and took off all the snow on the open ground. It was so warm the old bear came out, and begun her depredations. Father went and borrowed three steel bear-traps, set one in the middle, and baited it, and the others round it, and put no bait on them, covered them up in dirt, and put a long chain to them, with a grapple to it.

“The second night one of the outside traps was gone — chain, grappling, and all. The bear, too cunning to go into the trap where the bait was, had stepped into one of those that was covered up, while trying to jar the other off. Father sent me right off for John Elwell, while he loaded his gun and got ready. Uncle John came, and with him Black Cæsar. Cæsar was a master powerful man, and as spry as a cat. I cried and roared to go, but father refused, saying I might get hurt, and there was no knowing how far they might have to go, nor when they should get back; but

Cæsar, with whom I was a great favorite, said he would take care of me, and that he didn't believe the bear could carry that chain and grappling a great way. Finally father yielded. There was no trouble in tracking the bear, for the grappling had torn up the ground where it had hitched into the cradle-knolls and bushes. Sometimes they lost the trail for a good while, when it was evident that the bear had taken up the grappling, when it got fast, and carried it; and father said she must be caught by her fore paws, as he knew by her track that she walked on her hind legs, sometimes half a mile — trap, grappling, and all. They followed her into the woods nearly two miles, Cæsar helping me over the windfalls, and sometimes taking me on his shoulder, till finally, at Millbrook, we lost her track altogether. In vain they searched the woods. There was no sign of bear or trap. Discouraged, they gave it up, and sat down on the bank of the brook.

“Uncle John said she had got the grappling caught trying to swim the river, and was drowned, and he hoped she was. They had all about come to that conclusion, when I, who was playing on the bank, was attracted by some beautiful white and yellow moss growing at the roots of a black



ash, and going to get some, saw the grappling hooked over the main root of the ash. I instantly ran back, crying with fright, and feeling in fancy the bear's claws on my throat. It was the most singular place for a den you ever saw. You might have gone within three feet of it, and never suspected its existence.

- "The stream, which had formerly flowed under a high bank, had shifted its channel in some freshet, and the frost, working on the bank after the water was gone, had thrown down a great rock, which, catching one corner on the butt and the other on the roots of the big ash, was thus held up, while the earth beneath crumbled away. Under this shelf, with a very little work, the bear had made her den; and there she was, with her right fore leg in the trap, on a bed of pine boughs, with the grappling, — which she had not had time to bring in, we had followed her so closely, — caught in the roots at the mouth, which, had it not happened, we should never have found her. Father, with the greatest satisfaction, put two balls through her head, and then, taking hold of the chain, they dragged her out. When they found three cubs, you may well think I was delighted. I hugged, kissed, and patted them, and thought they were

the prettiest things I ever saw in my life. They were less than a foot long, had no teeth, and had not got their eyes open. O, how I begged to carry them all home! Father wouldn't hear to it, but allowed me to have one, and take my choice. I took the one that had a white face, like the old one, and cried well when they knocked the others on the head. Cæsar carried the cub home for me, and in gratitude I called him after him. How I loved that cub! I got some cow's milk, put it in a pan, and then put my finger in his mouth, and he would suck it, and thus suck up the milk. We carried him out to the barn, and tried to have him suck like a calf; but as soon as the cow smelt him, she was half crazy with fear, kicked, roared, broke her bow, and ran out of the barn. We never tried it again.

“He soon began to have teeth, and then would eat bread and potatoes, and most anything, but sugar and molasses was his great delight. He soon made friends with the dog and cat, and would play with them by the hour together.

“In the summer he would catch mice, frogs, and crickets, and get into mud-holes in the woods, and roll over till he was covered with mud; and when the wild berries, acorns, and hazel-nuts came, he

lived first rate. In the first part of the spring he would eat the young sprouts and tender leaves of the trees, — anything that was juicy, — and would rob birds' nests. As mother used to make me churn, I learned him to stand on his hind legs and help me, which he would sometimes do for half an hour, at other times but a few minutes. He would haul me on the sled as long as he liked, but when he thought he'd done it enough, there was no such thing as making him do any more. If I tried to force him, he would take me up in his paws and set me on a log, or leave me and run up a tree. He was very quick to imitate, and seeing me one night carrying in the night's wood, he took up a log in his paws, and, standing on his hind legs, walked in with it, and laid it by the fireplace. Ever after that he brought in all the night's wood, — that is, all the logs, — but he wouldn't touch the small wood, seeming to think that beneath him. He would take a log that three men couldn't move, and walk off with it. Indeed, I believe a bear is stronger on his hind legs than in any other way, for they always stand up for a fight.

“It was no small help to have him carry in the great logs, three feet through, that I used to have to haul on a sled, and the backsticks and fore-

sticks ; but I hated to do chores as bad as any boy ever did, and used to try to coax him with bread and molasses, and even honey, to carry in the small wood, but it was no use. He would eat the bread and honey, but wouldn't touch the wood.

“I believe, if we'd only thought of it, we might have taught that bear to chop wood ; for a bear will handle his paws as well as a man his hands. You throw anything to a bear, and he'll catch it ; and there's not one man to a hundred can strike a bear with an axe. He will knock it out of his hand with a force that will make his fingers tingle.

“But the greatest amusement was in the summer nights. In the daytime he would lay round and sleep ; but as night came on, he grew playful and wide awake. He would chase the dog, and then the cats till they would run up into the red oak at the door, then follow them as far as the limbs would bear him, pull them in, and catch them or shake them off.

“We kept him three years, and then had to kill him. It was a sad day to me. It was the first real trouble I ever had, and I don't know as I could have felt any worse if it had been a human being. When I found it was determined on, I

went over to Uncle Reuben's, and staid a week. I think all our folks felt almost as bad as I did."

"But what on earth did you kill him for, Uncle Isaac?"

"Why, we had to. He was always mischievous; but as he grew older, he grew worse. He would dig up potatoes after they were planted in the spring, and also in the fall; and he would break down and waste three or four bushels of corn to get a few ears to eat, when it was in the milk. Did you ever see how a bear works in a corn-field?"

"No, sir."

"Well, he gets in between the rows, spreads his fore paws, smashes down three or four hills, and then lies down on the heap and eats.

"He wouldn't kill the hogs, but would chase them all over the pasture, and into the water, and two or three were drowned. You couldn't put anything out of his reach, for there was no place he couldn't climb to, a door in the house he couldn't open, nor scarcely anything he couldn't break. Though spry as a cat, he wouldn't climb over a pair of bars, but would take them down, and leave them, go ranging round nights, and let the cattle into the fields. He would steal yarn,

that was put out to whiten, to make a bed of. He was the means of our keeping bees. He came home one day in April with his nose all swelled up, and half blind. He had found a swarm of bees in a hollow tree, and tried to get at them; but the hole in the tree was so small that he couldn't get his paw in, and the bees stung him till he was glad to retreat, finding he could get nothing. We tracked him in the snow that was still in the woods, cut the tree down, and brought it home. He used to plague us to death in sap time, drinking the sap and upsetting the trough, and we had to chain him up. But the crowning mischief, and that which cost him his life, was stealing butter."

"Stealing butter!" said Charlie.

"Yes: father had long been sick of him, and threatened to kill him; but mother and I begged him off. My sister Mary was going to be married; mother was making and selling all the butter she could, to get her a little outfit: it was hot weather, and she put some butter she was going to send to market in a box, tied it up in a cloth, and lowered it down the well, to keep cool. In the morning I saddled the horse to go to market; mother went to the well to get the butter, but there was no butter there. As soon as she could

speaking, for grief and anger, she exclaimed, 'That awful bear!'

"We went to his nest under the barn, and there was the box, licked as clean as a woman could wash it. The wicked brute hauled it up, bit the rope in two, and carried off the butter. That sealed his fate: mother said she wouldn't intercede for him any more, and I couldn't say a word, though I wanted to; and so 'he died of butter.'

"I felt so bad that I never cared to have any pets after that."

## CHAPTER XXII.

## RAID ON A BEAVER SETTLEMENT.

THEY now occupied every moment, from daylight and before, till in the evening, in hunting bears, digging out coons, stretching and scraping the skins, and trapping beaver and foxes.

The camp inside was hung around with skins, and outside the snow was covered with the bodies of the different animals, which attracted the wolves in troops, and the woods resounded with their howlings.

Uncle Isaac set a steel trap in a spring of water, and caught two silver-gray foxes. He now took four of the large mackerel-hooks, fastened them together, and wound them with twine, so as to form a grappling, fastened a strong cord, made of twisted deer sinews, to them, dipped them in grease, permitting it to cool after every dip, till the hooks were all covered in the great bunch of grease, fastened the rope to a tree, and kept watch. It was not long before a hungry wolf swallowed the ball of grease,



and, the hooks sticking in his throat, he was caught. The steel traps, which were very scarce in that day, and were all imported, were used for beaver, otter, and two of them for foxes; the other animals were taken in dead-falls and box-traps.

As they had a frow, to split out boards, and a saw, they made many box-traps, putting them together with wooden pins, and in them caught great numbers of minks and muskrats; they also killed many deer and moose.

The traps for beaver were set in holes cut in the ice, and the bait was scented, and made attractive with the composition in Uncle Isaac's vials. Another method was to dig a pit in the ground, make a road to it with stakes, then hang a board between the stakes, so nicely balanced, that, when the animal stepped upon it, it would turn, and let him into the pit. In order to attract the game, the bait was dragged along the ground, that it might leave its scent between the line of stakes, then placed beyond the pit, that the animal, in following up the scent, might step on the trap. The dead-falls were constructed by making an enclosure of stakes, open at one end, inside of which a piece of wood was laid on the ground crosswise, and fastened. They then fastened a heavy piece of hard

wood to a stake with a peg, so that it would play up and down easily: this was called the killer, the end of which was held up by a thong of deer sinew, which went over another crotchet stake driven into the ground. Through this stake a hole was bored, to admit a spindle; the string which held up the killer was fastened by a flat piece of wood, one end of which went into a notch in the stake, the other into a notch in the end of the spindle, like the spindle of a common box-trap; another heavy piece of wood was then placed one end on the ground, between two stakes, to keep it from rolling, the other on the top of the killer, to give force to the fall. When the animal touched the spindle to which the bait was fastened, both the killer and the stick placed on to reënforce it came down, and caught him between the killer and the piece on the ground.

In default of an auger, it could all be made with an axe, by using double stakes and strings, or withes. These were made larger or smaller, according to the size of the animal to be caught; they were surrounded with stakes, and covered on top with brush, to keep the animal from robbing them behind, or on top. For beaver, they set them in the paths where they went to the woods,

cut a piece of wood, flat on the upper side, four inches wide, and bevelling on the under side, so that it would rotate, canting it down on one edge, put that edge under the end of the spindle, and strewed over it twigs and chips of red willow and beaver root, rubbed with medicine, and when the beaver put his mouth or paw on the board it canted, and, lifting the end of the spindle, sprung the trap.

For raccoons, they set them at the ends of hollow logs, and in the little runs that led down to the ponds and brooks; and for the otter, at the places where they rubbed when they came out of the water, and near their sliding places. For raccoons, they baited with frogs, and chips of bears' and beavers' meat, with honey dropped on it; and for otters, with fish which they caught through holes in the ice.

As the winter wore away, thaws became more frequent, and the coons and beaver began to awake from their half-torpid state, they caught more and more, getting ten or twelve beavers a night.

They now separated, part of them living in the house camp, and part at the river camp and shanty, for the greater convenience of tending the traps, which were scattered along a range of many miles,

all assembling at the home camp on the Lord's day, when they had a meeting. As the season was now approaching when the ice would begin to break up, and the frequent rains had rendered the ice transparent, so they could see the beavers and muskrats under it, they determined to attack them in their houses. In the first place, they prepared and sharpened a great number of stakes, and, cutting through the ice, drove them into the bottom of the pond, around the houses, and around the holes in the bank, thus fastening the beavers in; then tearing down the houses with tools they had brought with them, they knocked the beavers on the head, and flung them out on the ice.

Beavers and muskrats will swim under the ice as long as they can hold their breath, then breathe it out against the ice: when it has absorbed oxygen from the water, they will take the bubble in again, and go on; the boys would follow them up, and, before they had time to take in the bubble, strike with their hatchets over them, and drive them away from their breath, when they would soon drown, and could be cut out.

They labored unremittingly, under the wildest excitement, stopping neither to eat nor drink till nearly sundown, when, bathed in perspiration,

every house was in ruins, and the ice thickly strewn with dead beavers: they then desisted.

“We are all as hot as we can be,” said Uncle Isaac. “The first thing to be done is to put on our clothes, and make a fire to cool off by. We’ve got about four tons of beaver carcasses here: it would take all night to haul them to the camp; and if we leave them here, all the wolves in the woods will be on hand, and not a hide of them be left by morning. So I don’t see any other way than to build a camp, and stay here; and we can have our choice, either to take them into the camp, or sit up by turns, and watch them.”

“I say take them into the camp,” said Joe Griffin. “And here’s just the place to build it, on this old windfall.”

“Now, Charlie,” said Uncle Isaac, “while we are building a camp, you and John run to the home camp, and get the kettle, a birch dish, and some tea.”

The rude shelter, sufficient for these hardy men, was soon completed, the beaver brought inside, and a fire built. Uncle Isaac proposed, as they had met with such luck, that they should have a beaver singed for supper. “They could afford it,” he said, “though, of course, it spoils the skin.”

This was unanimously agreed to, when, picking out one of the youngest and fattest, they cut off his tail, scalded and scraped off the scales, then, holding the rest over the fire, singed off all the hair, and scraped it clean with their knives. While Joe was turning the spit, and John making tea, Charlie noticed Uncle Isaac picking out some of the dryest of the wood, and piling it up a little distance from the camp, and putting beneath it a parcel of birch bark, as if he was going to light a fire.

“What are you going to do?” asked Charlie.

The old gentleman would give him no answer, only saying, with a knowing look, that he would see before morning.

The beaver, being roasted, was placed in the birch dish. Sitting round it, these hungry men, who had eaten nothing since long before the break of day, made fierce onslaught with their hunting-knives. For nearly half an hour no sound was heard but that of vigorous mastication, and the crackling of the fire. At length Joe, after looking round upon his companions and the great pile of game with a look of the most intense satisfaction, and speaking thick, with a rib of beaver between his teeth, broke the silence by saying “Haven’t we done it this time, Uncle Isaac?”

“Yes, Joseph,” replied the old hunter, speaking with great deliberation, and giving the name in full, a habit he had when much pleased, “we certainly have. I’ve been trapping in the woods winters, more or less, ever since I was a boy, with the Indians, and when the beavers were a great deal more plenty than they are now; but I never saw near so many taken at one time before.”

Some time during the night, John, who slept nearest to the door, was awakened by a concert of sounds so horrible that it caused him to jump right up on his feet, with a cry that awoke the rest, and, grasping Joe by the shoulder, exclaimed, “For Heaven’s sake, what is it?”

“It’s wolves,” said Uncle Isaac. “I was calculating on them: they scent the roast meat; the fire has burnt low, and that emboldens them. Throw on some wood, Joe; they must be taught to keep their distance, or there’ll be no sleep,” said he; and taking up a brand, he set fire to the pile outside, which lighting up the forest, the wolves withdrew, but still kept up their howling at a distance. It was now evident why Uncle Isaac had prepared the pile of wood out doors.

“We were careless,” said he, “to let the fire get so low, and might have paid dearly for it.”

“Why,” said John, “will they tackle men?”

“Yes, when there is a drove of them, and they are hungry: they are cowardly, cruel creeturs; I hate 'em,” said he, as they stood gazing on the gaunt forms flitting among the trees just beyond the line of fire-light, licking their dry jaws, and snapping their tusks. One old gray wolf, who seemed to be a leader, followed the track made by dragging the bodies of the beavers to the very edge of the shadow cast by the woods, so that his head and shoulders were distinctly visible.

“Only see the cruel varmint!” said Uncle Isaag; “see those jaws and tusks, and that great red tongue. We ought not to waste powder, but that fellow tempts a man too much: fire at him, John; aim for his eyes, and I'll finish him if you don't.”

John, needing no second admonition, fired on the instant, when the wolf, leaping forward, fell his whole length in the snow, and, rolling over a few times, stretched out, quivered, and became motionless.

“I mean to skin him in the morning,” said John.

“Then you must put him in the camp; for if he lies there, nothing will be left of him in the morning but bones.”

“Why, will the wolves eat each other?”



“Eat each other? Yes, just as quick as they’ll eat anything else. There’s no Christianity in ’em. They will dig up a dead body in a graveyard.”

“But how shall I get him?” said John, who, after this revelation, did not feel much like trusting himself far from the fire.

Uncle Isaac seized a brand, and, waving it in the air, the wolves retreated, and John took the dead wolf by the hind legs, and drew him to the fire.

After replenishing both fires with fuel, they lay down again, and were soon fast asleep, except John and Charlie, from whose eyes the events of the evening and the howling of the wolves had effectually banished sleep until near daybreak, when they too sank into a sound slumber.

They now broke into the other beaver houses, and, as the weather grew warmer, tapped the maples, procured sap to drink, and made sugar; and, as they could boil but little in their camp-kettle, they froze the sap. This took the water out, and reduced the quantity, leaving that which remained very sweet, and so much less in quantity to boil down.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## BREAKING CAMP.

“THERE are just two things,” said Uncle Isaac, “for us to make up our minds about. We’ve had great luck. We’ve got two silver-gray foxes, which is an uncommon thing. I lay it to the honey that I fried the bait in, the bloody neck of a moose that I dragged along the trail, and the earth I got from Joe Bradish’s fox-pen. We’ve taken a great many beavers, coons, minks, and otters, and the fur is all prime, for we didn’t begin till the fur was good. It will be good about three weeks longer, till May. If we go now, we can get out of the woods to the nearest road, and haul our furs on the sledges, by going twice over the road, or we can stay and trap as long as the fur is good, build canoes, and, by carrying round the falls, take the furs and all our truck right to our own doors.”

“I,” said Joe, “go in for staying till the very last minute, trapping the very last beaver, and then taking to the water.”

The boys were clamorous for going by water.

“It will be nothing,” said Uncle Isaac, “to carry our canoes and furs round the falls, to what it would to haul the sledges over the soft snow; and then, when we get out of the woods, we shall find the snow gone, have to leave them, and come after them with teams.”

Notwithstanding the excitement of this wild, fresh life in the woods, the boys had by no means lost sight of the great object of their efforts — the fitting away of the Hard-Scrabble.

“Uncle Isaac,” asked Charlie, “how much do you suppose these furs are worth?”

“Well, I never like to crow till I have got out of the woods; but it is remarkable, it is, our luck.”

“How much? Do tell us!”

“I don’t think you’ll have to make any wooden shrouds.”

“Shall we have enough to rig the vessel?”

“How much, Charlie, do you suppose these silver-gray fox-skins are worth?” asked Joe.

“I’m sure I don’t know.”

“Forty dollars apiece for the real silvers, and the silver-gray twenty-five.”

“O, my! and the beaver-skins?”

“About six dollars apiece.”

Beaver fur, notwithstanding it was plenty, was in far more request than at present, as it was then the only material for nice hats; but silk has since taken its place, beaver being too heavy a fur for wearing.

“And the coons?” asked John.

“One dollar apiece. The bears about forty shillings.”

“Why, the bears alone will come to about ten pounds!”

“The otter?”

“The otter six dollars, and the fisher six.”

“Mink and muskrats?”

“About two shillings for a mink; muskrat, seventy-five cents.”

“I reckon,” said Uncle Isaac, “we’ve made nearly a hundred dollars a month apiece, and shall be here a little short of five months. We shan’t get many more beaver, but we shall get more otter, may get another silver-gray fox, and lots of muskrats.”

“Then,” cried Charlie, jumping to his feet, “we’ve got enough.”

“Hurrah! yes,” said John; “and we’ve got all summer left to earn more in.”

“How much do you calculate it’s going to take to fit her for sea?”

“Fifteen hundred dollars—three hundred seventy-five apiece.”

“It won’t take it. You’ve made too large a calculation, though it’s an excellent plan to make a large calculation. You’ve gone upon the supposition of paying the regular price for labor and canvas. It ain’t going to cost you the trade price for canvas, by a great deal, nor for making the sails, fitting the rigging, and putting it on. I tell you, if we get home safe, you’ll have enough to give her the best of rigging, cables, and anchors, and enough left to load, provision her for a voyage, and pay the crew.”

Uncle Isaac now exerted all the craft he was master of to trap another silver fox; but, notwithstanding all his arts, the essences and other attractions he used, his efforts were for a long time fruitless. At length he built a booth, and, having first removed every vestige of offal from around the camp, he roasted a beaver, and besmeared it with medicine, then dragged the bloody neck of a deer just killed around the bait, and into the woods, and lay in wait several nights. He finally shot his fox, which he knew was in the vicinity, as he had seen him several times, which was the occasion of his taking so much pains.

Having accomplished this to his heart's content, and exclaiming, "What will Sam and Captain Rhines say to that!" he avowed he would not bait another trap, but instantly set himself to hunting for canoe birch. He was not long in finding one — though at the present day they are so rare that the Eastern Indians have pretty much abandoned the use and construction of canoes — of sufficient size, bare of branches for several feet, and free from cracks and knots, and, with his knife and a sharp wedge, carefully peeled the bark from the trunk. It was a slow process, requiring great care, for this canoe, which was designed to carry most of the furs and provisions, was to be thirty-four feet long. In this labor all united, under the direction of Uncle Isaac. They next procured long strips of cedar, split with the frow from a straight-grained log, — four of them, — which were to form the gunwales, an inch thick and two inches wide, also a large number of strips for linings, an inch thick and two inches wide, strips of ash for ribs, half an inch thick and two inches wide, and spruce roots soaked in hot water for thread. When all these materials were procured, they were carried to a level piece of ground near the camp. While the boys, with their knives, were

shaping and smoothing the sheathing and timbers, and stripping the spruce roots into thread, Uncle Isaac, aided by Joe, modelled the canoe. They set up four stakes in the ground, two at each end, nearly as far apart as the canoe was to be long, and laid the bark on the ground between them, with the side that went next to the wood outside, the ends brought together and put between the stakes, then bound four of the cedar strips together by pairs in several places with roots, then bound the ends together to form the gunwales, and fastened them to the stakes. The ribs were then laid across the bark on the ground, the longest in the middle, and decreasing gradually towards each end. Stones were placed upon the middle of these to keep them down, the ends were then successively bent up and tucked between the gunwale strips, and fastened very near together. Other strips were then placed outside of these, lengthwise, and where they lapped, nicely bevelled, forming an outside covering, like the planks of a vessel. They were to keep the ribs in their places, and strengthen the structure.

Uncle Isaac now elevated each end by putting a stone under in two places, to give a proper curve. He then went all over his work, pulling up or

shoving down the ribs that were placed between the gunwales, and thus shaping her to suit his eye, till, being satisfied with his efforts, he fastened several of the ribs securely to the inner rail strip to preserve the shape, and bringing up the bark, fitted it between the strips, and sewed it with roots, through both the bark and the ribs.

A number of bars were now put across, their ends brought against the rail, and sewed to it. The seams in the bark, at the ends and along the sides, were sewed, and then payed over with spruce gum mixed with charcoal dust.

The boys enjoyed themselves much at this work, as it was the very thing they had resolved to do in their summer holiday, with which the building of the Hard-Scrabble had so rudely interfered.

“I calculate to give these canoes to you boys; so I suppose you want them made in style.”

“Of course, Uncle Isaac,” said Charlie, “because, you know, we shall be asked who made them.”

Uncle Isaac boiled the moss of a tree in water in which the roots of wild gooseberries had been boiled, and made a red dye. In this he colored porcupine quills; others he colored blue and green, with other barks and roots, the names of which he



would not tell, and ornamented the canoe and stained the paddles. The canoe was thirty-four feet long, four and a half wide, and nearly three deep.

“I’ll warrant her to carry twenty-five hundred,” said Uncle Isaac.

They now built a smaller one, and packing their furs, furnished themselves with moose meat, smoked and dried, for provision on the way, turned their backs on the woods, and arrived safely at home in hoeing time, where Uncle Isaac found his crops and cattle in fine order, all his affairs having been intrusted to Ricker during his absence.

When they started for home, John said to Charlie, as he took up his paddle, “I’ve had woods enough to last me for a long time, and shall be contented to go to work.”

“I am only sorry,” said Charlie, “that I couldn’t find a bear’s cub that I could take home with me.”

## CHAPTER XXIV.

THE HARD-SCRABBLE WEIGHS ANCHOR. — CHARLIE GETS MARRIED.

DURING their absence Captain Rhines and Ben had filled Fred's store with goods, to be sold on half profits, which enabled him to furnish his portion of the money without any detriment to his business.

Isaac having left a draw-bill, Mr. Welch had sent to Captain Rhines the money that belonged to him. The sails were done, and the boards to load the sloop were sawed. Letters had been received from Isaac, stating that he should not be at home till March. Thus they had abundance of time.

Captain Rhines took the furs to New York in the *Perseverance*, sold them there for a high price, — there was a great foreign demand, and furs were up, — and bought the rigging.

They found the vessel was so buoyant that the lumber they had cut would not load her. Captain

Rhines advised them to carry part of a deck-load of spars.

John went to Portland, and Charlie began to clear a portion of his place large enough to set a house, and for a small field, it being just the time of year to fall trees while the leaves were on.

As Charlie was in hopes to have use for his timber in ship-building, he did not wish to burn it up, and therefore cleared but a small portion.

Ben and Charlie worked together. One week they worked on Elm Island, and the next on Pleasant Point. There was also another attraction at Elm Island — *a baby*. The time passed pleasantly with Charlie. The cherry and apple trees he had planted in the garden were in blossom; and, though he had outgrown his playthings in some measure, he had by no means outgrown his love for the children, who, falling heirs to all these treasures, enjoyed them with the highest relish.

The vessel was rigged in the course of the summer by Captain Rhines and Ben, and the rigging thoroughly stretched in the hot weather.

When John arrived at Portland, he found that Mr. Starrett had bought the cables and anchors of a vessel cast away at Gay Head, larger somewhat than the Hard-Scrabble, but nearly new. They

were sold at auction for a reduced price; also a dipsey-lead and line, chest of tools, and compasses.

When the snow came, Charlie cut and hauled out spars enough to complete the deck-load of the vessel; but, although they piled them up ten feet above deck, they could not bring her deck to the water, she was so buoyant.

Captain Murch, as we must call him now, came home just as they were completing the lading.

John came home to see Isaac off, and to settle up the business. The crew were shipped, as in the Ark, for nominal wages and a privilege.

Sally had a liberal allowance of room given to her for a venture.

Peterson went before the mast, and his boy went as cook. Isaac persuaded Joe Griffin and Henry to go with him, Joe as mate. The rest of the crew were made up of the neighbors' boys.

When they came to settle accounts, they found that the cost of outfit had been brought down to a thousand dollars, instead of fifteen hundred, as they estimated at first. There were several reasons for this. The canvas cost them much less than it would had they bought it at a warehouse. Captain Rhines had bought the rigging in New York, where he was well acquainted, cheap. **Mr.**

Starrett had bought the cables and anchors for two thirds price, and would take no commission. Captain Rhines and Ben charged very low wages for making the sails, fitting and putting on the rigging, and the boys could not make them take any more.

“We’ve got the advantage of you now, boys,” said the captain. “You wouldn’t let us lend you money, but you can’t make us take more for our work than we like.”

On this account they were able to settle all their bills, provision the vessel for the voyage, load her, and even have something left, which exceeded their most sanguine expectations.

Isaac, whose proportion had all been paid in cash, had remaining but four dollars. John had nine shillings of the money resulting from his venture in the Ark, and the proceeds of hunting, although he had some wages due him in Portland. Fred, who had paid nearly every dollar of his proportion in orders, except what the cargo cost, could have advanced seventy-five dollars more without detriment to his business; while Charlie was better off in respect to ready money than either of them. There was sufficient reason for this. His wages as master workman had been more than the rest, and

he had worked all the time in the winter making the spars, rudder, and windlass, and building the boats. He had also furnished the timber and spars for the cargo of the vessel. Fred could not pay this in orders; so he and the others had to pay Charlie one hundred and fifty dollars apiece in money, which left him better off than they, as he had his farm and a fourth of the vessel, while Isaac's goods were the greater part on commission, and belonged to Captain Rhines, Ben, and Uncle Isaac.

It was a pleasant morning when the vessel weighed anchor, a fair wind, a little quartering, just right to make every sail draw; and all the population that could get there were assembled around the banks of Captain Rhines's Cove. They had a singular fashion before, and for many years after, the revolution,—even till 1812 and later,—of rigging vessels into topsail sloops, and even sent them to the East Indies.

The old sloop *Messenger*, of Portland, and *Stock*, of Boston, owned by the Messrs. Parsons, were of this class.

The *Hard-Scrabble* presented a novel sight on that morning, and well did her appearance correspond to her name. As the sun shone upon her

sides, wherever they were out of water, it revealed a streak of black and a streak of white, where the black pitch and white wood alternated. Her sails, though well made, of good material, and setting well, were the color of flax, not being bleached. Her lower mast was rather short in proportion to the top, top-gallant, and royal masts. The main-mast was set well aft, and raked a good deal. The bowsprit and jib-boom were long. She had a sprit-sail yard and double martingale. The fore-braces led to the end of the bowsprit, the others to the end of the jib-boom. In bad weather they had preventer-braces that led aft to the rail. She carried fore-topmast staysail, jib, and flying-jib. She had no sail on the lower yard, because, when they built her, they did not think they could afford it. Had they known how they were coming out, Charlie would have done it.

All the paint on her was the lamp-black and oil with which her name was put on, and a little more, where Ben had painted it on the brunt of her top-sail. She was stowed so full of lumber that the men could only heave forward of the windlass, and it was piled so high that the mainsail was obliged to be reefed, and a false saddle put on to keep the boom up; while in glaring contrast to the rest of

the structure was the beautiful boat, which Charlie had built to show what he could do, gayly painted, on the davits, and for which he had made a mast and sail.

In the warm sunshine, under lee of a high ledge that sheltered them from the wind, were seated Captain Rhines's folks, Uncle Isaac and his wife, Ben and Sally, the boys, and old Mrs. Yelf, who was gazing with great complacency upon the royal her old fingers had woven, — a labor of love, — as it swelled out in the fresh breeze, and also Tige Rhines, a few paces in front, a most interested and observant spectator.

As she faded from view, and the forms of Isaac and Joe, standing on the quarter, could no longer be recognized, the boys turned their eyes upon each other in silence.

“Well, boys,” said Uncle Isaac, at length, laying his hand upon Charlie's shoulder, “it's been a hard scrabble; but you've done it, and she's gone to seek her fortune and yours. May the Lord be with them!”

“You've done it, too, without the old folks,” said the captain; “and that, I suppose, makes it the sweeter.”

“No, we haven't, Captain Rhines,” said Fred.



"I never should have been able to have built my part of her without the old folks."

"I shouldn't have had anything," said John, "if it hadn't been for the folks that built the Ark, and carried my venture, — went into the woods, and showed me how to hunt and trap."

"I'm sure," said Charlie, "I never should have had anything, or been anything but a poor, forlorn castaway, if it had not been for father and mother, Captain Rhines, Uncle Isaac, and Joe, — yes, and everybody round here. And wasn't mother the means of making the sails?"

"You may try as hard as you like to make out that you are not good for much," said Ben; "but you'll have hard work to make us, or anybody else, believe it."

"Well, father, it makes boys smart to have friends to love them, encourage, and show them; tell them they are smart, and say 'stuboy,' to have plenty to eat, and see a little chance to do something for themselves, and folks trying to make them happy. If a boy has got anything in him, it must come out."

"Yes," said Uncle Isaac. "And if there ain't anything, it can't come out."

After the rest had gone, the boys sat watching the vessel till she mingled with the thin air.

“Now, I’m glad we’ve done as we did,” said Charlie. “We might have hired the money of father, or Captain Rhines, have sent the vessel off, and, perhaps, paid for her, and paid them; but suppose she had made nothing, or been lost — then we should have been in debt, and felt mean enough; now she is ours, and paid for; if she is lost, we owe nobody: we’ve learned a good deal, and are young enough to earn more money.”

“What are you going to do now, John?”

“Going back to Portland.”

“I suppose I ought to go to Stroudwater. Mr. Foss wants me: he’s going to build two vessels.”

“I know what he wants to do,” said Fred.

“What’s that?”

“Get married.”

“Well, so I do, awfully.”

“Then,” said John, “why don’t you do it?”

“Yes,” said Fred. “It’s a leisure time now: the snow is about gone, and we’ll all turn to and put you up a log house in no time.”

“That’s it, Charlie. Come, you are the oldest; set a good example: I’ll raise the crew. Fred wants to follow suit.”

“I’m a good mind to build a log house before I go to Portland;” which resolution was the result

of many previous conversations with Mary Rhines, in which they had determined to begin, as Ben and Sally, Joe Griffin and his wife, had done. The boys took good care not to let his resolution cool, but instantly set off, post-haste, for Captain Rhines's, where they found Ben, Sally, and Uncle Isaac, and, taking them aside, commended the affair to them. Uncle Isaac needed no prompting, and in a fortnight the house was built, differing in no wise from Joe's, except that it had a chimney and glazed windows, which Captain Rhines declared they should have: he said the bricks and the windows would do for another house.

John now started for Portland, and Charlie for Stroudwater, in order to earn all he could before settling down. He was never satisfied unless he could be making some improvement. In Portland (on his way to Stroudwater) he saw a vessel that had put in for a harbor. It was built for a privateer in the war, and of a most beautiful model.

He ascertained her proportions, and, after he went to work at Stroudwater, amused himself with trying to imitate her with a block of wood, making a half model, and got so much interested that he went into Portland to compare his work with the original, till he got it as accurate as

possible; then he put a stem, keel, and stern-post on, and painted it, intending to give it to Bennie for a plaything, and, putting it up on a brace in the shop, thought no more about it; but one stormy day, sitting in the shop, and thinking about the proportions of a vessel he had been at work upon, his eye fell upon the model. A new idea was instantly suggested; he leaped from his seat, took square and compass, divided the model accurately into pieces an inch in thickness from stem to stern, then took a fine saw, and sawed it all up. He then planed a board smooth, fastened the keel, stem, and stern-post of his model on to it, placed inside of them the blocks corresponding to the forward, after, and midship frames, and several others between them, and fastened them to the board; he found he could, by placing his square on these blocks, obtain a water-line along her side, follow the model, shape his vessel accurately, and know just what kind of a vessel he was going to have when he was done. Here was an end to his sweeps on the beach, tumbling in timbers, and guessing, to a great extent. He had got a skeleton model, the latest improvement till the present one of close models.

While he was contemplating his work, Mr. Foss came along: he showed it to him. The old carpenter saw it in a moment.

“Charlie,” said he, “you’ve made a great improvement. I undertook to learn you, and you have learned me. That’s a great thing: that’s going to save money, time, and timber. With the rising line and shortening line, you can model and build a vessel, and know what you are going to do. I’ll give you the dimensions of this vessel we are getting the timber for, and I want you to make a model of her.”

“I will try it.”

Charlie modelled, and was successful. He returned home in June, and was married. He found that the trees which he had girdled in the fall had leaved; but the leaves were most of them small and withering. He had drawn a cordon, many rods in width, all around the buildings, and especially round the little peninsula, in the midst of which towered the great elm, sparing a handsome tree every now and then, so that after the girdled trees had fallen down, and been removed, they might be out of the reach of fires.

Charlie had been married but a few weeks when the young pair made their appearance at Elm Island.

“Mother,” said Charlie, “do you remember one night, when I first bought my place, I came home

from there, you asked me what was the matter, and I put you off?"

"Yes; I saw you'd been crying, and that was what made me ask you."

"I had been thinking about old times, and my mother. I wanted, then, and I want now, as I have got settled on my place, to go to St. John, and get her body, and have her buried under an elm there is there. It is a lovely spot: it was almost the first thing that came into my mind when I saw the place, and that was what I had been crying about. When she died, I followed her to the grave in rags, no one to go with me but the Irish woman of whom we hired the room: she was a good-hearted woman, poor herself, but did what she could for us. Many a crust has she given me; and if she is living, I'll let her know I haven't forgotten it. Mother, now that I have a home of my own, I can't rest any longer to have her lie in that miserable corner, among the worst of creatures, the place all grown up with bushes. I want to bring her here."

"I am sure I would, Charlie."

"Do you think father would go with me?"

"Go! to be sure he would. The Perseverance is out fishing now, but she will be in soon; she is

only hired for one trip. I tell you what you do, Charlie: after haying, bring Mary over here, and leave her; you and Ben take the schooner, and go. When you get back, we'll all of us attend the funeral, have the minister preach a sermon, and everything done as it should be; but two is not enough: there ought to be three."

"We can run into Portland, and get John. I would rather have him go with us than anybody else."

The noble boy accomplished his object, and deposited the ashes of the mother so dear to him in the spot he had chosen. It was a sweet resting-place: the branches of the majestic tree, green in the first verdure of summer, almost swept the grave; the brook murmured gently as it rounded the little promontory; the ground-sparrow built her nest, and reared her young, upon the turf that covered it; and the low-voiced summer winds breathed requiems over the sainted dead.

Often, on Sabbath evenings, as Charlie, with his young wife, visited the spot, did he lift up his heart in gratitude to Him who had given him a home, friends, and land of his own, and enabled him to pay the last tokens of affection to the mother he so dearly loved. Gratifying the tastes

he had acquired in his native land, and aided by his wife, he surrounded the spot with flowers and shrubbery.

Charlie's marriage, so far from involving him in any additional expense, increased his facilities for acquiring; for he had married one who was indeed a helpmeet. Captain Rhines would have furnished his daughter abundantly; but she, like John, preferred to earn it herself.

"I never saw such children as mine are," said the captain. "They won't let me do anything for them."

"Wait, father," said Mary, "till we get a frame-house, and our land cleared. We may burn this up, and it is good enough for that: besides, father, I know how Charlie feels; he abhors the idea of marrying on; he will feel a good deal better to get under way himself: you know, you can give me any time, if you want to. Charlie, John, and Fred are all alike about being helped."

The very first thing Charlie did after he got into his house was to set a bear-trap; the next, to make a loom and all the fixtures for Mary. Some years before, her father had given her a pair of sheep, and now she had quite a flock, and had made blankets and other articles for housekeeping before her marriage; her mother had furnished her with flax,



and the hum of her wheel kept time with the strokes of Charlie's hammer, as he worked on his boats. He brought over a host of hens from Elm Island; but ducks and geese he didn't dare to bring, the foxes were so plenty and destructive; but he calculated to trap them, and did hope the bears would get into his corn. O, how he did want to go into farming, down with trees, put in the fire, and raise corn and grain! But then he wanted to save his shade trees, and had a contract to build a lot of boats for vessels that were building in Portland. This paid better than farming, and must be done right off; therefore he must defer the gratification; so he hired Ricker to help him, and set to work upon his boats. Thus employed we must leave him, to follow the fortunes of Captain Murch, in the Hard-Scrabble.

## CHAPTER XXV.

## STRIKING WHILE THE IRON'S HOT.

THE Hard-Scrabble had a good run off the coast, holding the wind to the edge of the Gulf Stream; proved herself an excellent sea boat, and, although so deep loaded, a good sailer. It was evident that, light, she was faster than ordinary.

France and England were then at war. Napoleon's star was just rising above the horizon, and our young captain found he had arrived at the rich Island of Martinique in a most favorable time. But few American vessels were there, barracks were building for troops, boards were wanted, and there was a great demand for small spars, as masts for drogers, booms for French men-of-war that came in there to refit after the conflicts that were constantly occurring between the hostile fleets.

Isaac sold his boards for forty dollars per thousand, and obtained a hogshead of molasses for a small spar which cost little more than the expense of cutting.

"I wish I had loaded her with spars," said Isaac to his mate.

"You'll make money enough," said Joe, "as it is: you ought to be satisfied. But I wish I'd brought spars for a venture."

Isaac now bought iron, and thoroughly bolted his knees, and, heaving the vessel out, butt-bolted the plank, and painted her upper works. The fastening was put in by him and his mate; for Isaac was possessed of all the native ingenuity of his uncle for handling tools.

"Now, Mr. Griffin," said he, "we need not fear to put the molasses in her, and we'll see if we can't bring her scuppers to the water."

Just as they were ready to take in molasses, a French man-of-war came in, that had been disabled in an action with an English frigate. As she lay in the offing, the commander sent his lieutenant aboard the *Hard-Scrabble*, to see if she had brought any spars that would make him a main-yard. The lieutenant informed Isaac that they had broken the spar nearly off in trying to escape from the enemy, but that they had fished, and made it answer a temporary purpose; that they must have a spar, if it could be procured, no matter what the price.

"Where is it injured?" asked Isaac; "in the slings?"

"No; well out on the quarter: it was a poor stick; there were some large knots in it, and it broke square, without splintering; that is, it cracked, though it didn't come in two."

Isaac replied that he would come on board in the course of an hour, and see the captain.

"What is the use to go aboard?" said Joe; "you haven't got a thing but a spar you've saved for a derrick, and haven't brought anything that would make him even a royal mast."

"I ain't so sure of that. Come down below, Joe." When they were by themselves, he said, "Joe, suppose I should offer him the mainmast; could you and I get her home?"

After reflecting a moment, he replied, "Go ahead, captain: it will be summer time; we shall have southerly winds, and we've got provisions enough."

"But what will the crew say? We've no right to disable the vessel, and run the risk of losing her, and their lives, without their consent."

"If you'll give me authority to offer them a hogshhead of molasses apiece, I'll make 'em willing, and more than willing."

Joe went forward, got the men together, and broached the matter. They not only made no objection, but received the proposition with cheers.

“We’ll put it all into Fred’s store, boys,” said Henry Griffin, “and let him sell it for us on commission — sweeten him well.”

Isaac lowered the boat Charlie had made, — whose rowing and sailing qualities attracted the attention of all in the harbor, — put four oars in her, and went on board the man-of-war in good shape.

There was a very kindly feeling existing at that time between us and the French, who had aided us in the struggle for independence.

The French commander received Isaac with all the politeness of his nation. Isaac went aloft, and looked at the spar. It was just as the lieutenant had stated. When he came down, he said, —

“Captain, I haven’t any spars; didn’t bring any but small ones; but I’ll sell you my mainmast.”

“But if you sell your mast,” cried the Frenchman, in astonishment, “how are you to get home?”

“That is my own lookout.”

“What strange people you Americans are! But is it large enough?”

“It’s eighty feet long and twenty-eight inches through.”

“That is long enough,” said the Frenchman. “It is a very little shorter than the old yard, but will answer, as the sail does not haul out. It is more than large enough.”

“It is a very good stick—worth two of your old one.”

“But to take your mast out of your vessel you will ask a great price.”

“If you will take it out,—for I have no purchase sufficient,—give me your old spar and a thousand dollars, you may have it.”

“A thousand dollars!” interrupted the lieutenant. “That is more than your whole craft is worth.”

“Perhaps so to you, but not so to me. Besides, I risk my life, and that of my men, and my cargo, by disabling my vessel.”

“I must have the spar, and I’ll give you the money,” said the captain.

He invited Isaac to take wine with him, which he declined.

“I’ve seen strange things to-day,” said the Frenchman. “A captain that would sell the mast out of his vessel, and wouldn’t drink a glass of wine.”

In the intercourse which grew out of this trade, the Frenchman noticed Isaac's boat, — his own had been riddled with shot, — and he wanted to buy her.

“There's not a boat in this harbor,” said Isaac, “that can pull or sail with her. I'll sell her. I'll sell anything but my country and my principles. If you want her enough to give me one hundred dollars for her, take her.”

The Frenchman took her. The boatswain's crew of the man-of-war brought the yard alongside, and took out the mast.

Isaac and Joe got the spar on board, sawed it off square where it was cracked, then took a whip-saw and split it into halves the whole length, turned the halves end for end, and put it together again, thus bringing the joint in another place, and making the spar just as long as it was before, and then treenailed it together.

A yard is differently shaped from a mast, being biggest in the middle. By their turning the halves, although the length was the same, there was a slag in the place of the joint, and a bunch at the ends. They filled up the slag with plank, the bunch at the bottom helped out the step of the mast, and that at the top to form the masthead. They then

put on the hounds and the old trestle-trees. Joe, who was no mean blacksmith, hooped the whole with iron, above and below the wake of the main-sail. They now put in the mast, and set up the rigging.

As the mast was so much smaller than the other, they did not dare to send up the top and top-gallant masts; but they gave additional strength to the masts by putting the topmast backstays and also the headstays on to the head of the lower mast, thus leaving the stays of the two masts on one, to compensate for the smaller size of the spar. They were not afraid now to carry a whole main-sail and fore-staysail. They also sent up the fore-yard, and bent the topsail on it for a square-sail.

In order that she might not look stunt, Joe made a light spar to take the place of a topmast, to set colors on. They put the top-gallant rigging and backstays on it, and the flying-jib for a gaff-topsail. Thus they had nearly as much sail as before, and all the large sails, without cutting a foot of rigging or a yard of canvas.

“It takes us ‘Hard-Scrabble boys’ to do things,” said Joe, when the whole was completed. “Hurrah for the Hard-Scrabble!” and jumping on to the windlass-bitts at one bound, and slapping his hands against his sides, he crowed most lustily.



Mails were now established by Congress, and communication was more easy. The boys were impatiently awaiting news from Isaac. They did not manifest the patient endurance of Ben while the Ark was gone, but were running to the office every mail day.

At length word came from John that Captain Crabtree had arrived, bringing news that Isaac had sold his lumber for forty dollars per thousand, got a hogshead of molasses for a spar, sold Charlie's boat for one hundred dollars, and Sally's venture for ninety-six, and had agreed to sell his mast to the captain of a French frigate for a mainmast for a thousand dollars, and was coming home under jury-masts, and that Crabtree came away then.

When Mr. Welch heard of it, he declared he should have a ship when he got back if he had to buy one for him.

"You can't have him," said Captain Rhines. "You ought to have held on to him when you had him. He belongs to the boys."

"But the boys can't build him an Indiaman."

"Can't they? I'd like to know what they can't do! Besides, they'll have good backers. I've been in both kinds of business, and it's my opinion there's more to be made in West India than there

is in East India business, at any rate while this war lasts, though it may not have so large a sound and be quite so genteel, which goes a great ways with *some people*."

"Especially if you can raise your own cargoes, build your own ships, make your own rigging, and weave your own sails," added Mr. Welch, laughing.

In a few days they had a letter from Isaac, telling the particulars, saying that they were ready to take in cargo; and he wanted Charlie to have a mast all made and ready to go in when he got home, and a load of spars for men-of-war, lower masts, yards, and smaller spars; that he would take a few large ones on deck, and go to Cadiz, — for the Spaniards were in the war, and spars were high there, — and would load back with salt. He said all hands were well, the vessel tight, sailed and worked first rate; and he had got a bag of coffee for old Mrs. Yelf.

"I can get the mast fast enough on Elm Island," said Charlie, "roll it into the water, and tow it over; but how does he think I'm going to haul those heavy spars on bare ground, enough to load that sloop?"

"I'll tell you how," said Ricker. "You know

that place where the brook goes right through a gap in the ledge?"

"Yes."

"Well, make a pair of gates to open and shut in that gap, dam the water, and flow it back, till the brook is deep enough to float the timber, then twitch and roll it into the pond, float it down to the gates, open them, and down it will go into the cove, right alongside your vessel. I know all about that work. I never did much else."

"That will be just the thing," said Charlie, "for some of the largest trees grow within half a gunshot of the pond."

"You'll have to stir yourselves," said Captain Rhines. "The way he's rigged that vessel, according to his letter, he won't be much longer than common on the passage."

"I wish Joe Griffin was here," said Charlie.

"I guess he's done you more good where he is."

Charlie obtained men, got his gates made, his mast cut and made, and part of the spars cut, when the sloop arrived in Boston.

When she was again ready for sea, she presented quite a different appearance. They finished her cabin, put a billet-head on her, painted her hull and

spars, put studding-sail booms on her yards. The decks were worn smooth, and the sails bleached white. She had a square-sail, and looked like another vessel.

Pluck and principle win the day. The cargo which they carried out in this rough craft, built of white pine, and half fastened, amounted to eleven thousand seventy-five dollars, bought their homeward cargo, and left them three hundred dollars in cash. The mast Isaac sold to the Frenchman paid all the expenses of the voyage within fifty dollars, and, after selling their molasses, left them cash and sales twenty-six thousand six hundred and five dollars, six thousand six hundred fifty-one dollars and twenty-five cents apiece, Charlie having one hundred dollars more, the price of the boat, half of which he gave to Joe, Captain Rhines, and Ben, put glass windows in the meeting-house, and clapboarded it. Uncle Isaac and others built a steeple. The boys gave a bell, and Isaac brought a bag of coffee and a barrel of sugar for Parson Goodhue.

During the fall and winter Charlie cut spars enough to freight the sloop again, and built a few boats.

The Hard-Scrabble returned, having made a

profitable voyage; and, as the spring opened, Charlie had leisure to attend to farming. He planted among the trees, whose naked branches flung no shadow, and whose dead limbs and seasoned trunks, continually dropping, afforded an inexhaustible supply of dry fuel.

At leisure intervals he hewed out timber for a house and barn frame; and, as he now had money, hired Ricker, and, after the harvest was gathered in the fall, cut down and burned up all the dry trunks of the trees, when the ground was wet, and there was no risk of the fires running.

He now had a large belt of cleared land between the grove — behind which he had resolved to place his permanent buildings — and the great elm and forest, also many beautiful trees scattered here and there over the slope trending to the shore.

“It has made some work,” said he, “to save these trees; but they are a life-long source of beauty and happiness.”

As the next spring opened, he was about to attack the forest in earnest, when his plans were entirely changed by a communication from Captain Rhines and Uncle Isaac.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## PROGRESS.

CHARLIE now possessed what in those days was considered a handsome property.

As the spring came on, he made sugar, and determined to cut and burn the growth of white maple, birch, and ash that covered the flat, that he might have field pasturage, and indulge his taste for farming. But his plans were brought to a sudden termination, and the land was to be cleared in a manner quite different from that which he had anticipated.

About four o'clock one afternoon, as he and Ricker were grinding their axes, in preparation for the morrow, Ben, Captain Rhines, Uncle Isaac, and Fred landed in the cove. As Charlie went to meet them, Fred held up a letter.

"We've come to set you to work," said Captain Rhines. "We were afraid that, living here by yourself, with plenty of money, you would get rusty and lazy."

“I was afraid I should myself, and so am getting ready to go into the woods. Come, go into the house, all of you.”

The letter was from Isaac. He was at Cadiz, waiting for a cargo of salt.

“He says he wants a larger vessel; that the demand is for large spars for men-of-war, lower masts, yards, and bowsprits; that he can't carry them in that vessel, and that the few he did carry he had to run over the rail forward and aft, and he liked to have lost his vessel going out by one getting adrift.”

“How large a vessel does he want, Captain Rhines?” asked Charlie.

“Seven hundred tons, — a proper mast ship, — large enough to carry real whoppers, one hundred and eight feet long and thirty-six inches through, with a port at each end big enough to drive in a yoke of oxen.”

Neither Charlie, nor even Fred, who thought the Hard-Scrabble a monster for size, seemed startled by this.

“Is he in a hurry for her?”

“No; he said he wanted you to be thinking about it; and he will let the masts alone, and take fish, boards, and staves to Madeira, or some of the Danish islands.”

“I will go to cutting the timber to-morrow. I’d rather cut it into ship-timber than burn it. It won’t be fifty rods from the yard. As I am clearing, I can save what I come across, and set up the vessel in the fall, if he is in no hurry. Who’ll be the owners?”

“Mr. Welch, Ben, Uncle Isaac, myself, and you ‘Hard-Scrabble boys.’ There’s eight of us. We’ll all own alike. Give her a hard-wood floor, white oak top, buy the timber of you, and take her at the bills.”

“I’m agreed. What’s the dimensions?”

“I’ve got them here. Isaac has seen an English mast ship out there, and sent home her proportions. But you must build a two-story frame-house first to lodge your men. You’ll want fifty or sixty men before you get through.”

“I can get along with a log house — make it bigger. Some can sleep in the barn in warm weather. I want something else a great deal more than I do a frame-house.”

“What is that?” asked Ben.

“A saw-mill right on this brook, where I can saw all my deck, ceiling, outboard plank, and waterways.”

“That’s a fact,” said Uncle Isaac. “I go in for a mill. I’ll build in it, and work on it.”



“I hope you won’t have a wooden crank,” said Fred.

“Nor tread back with the foot,” said Ben, “like this old rattle-trap on the river.”

“There’s water and fall enough,” said Captain Rhines; “and we’ll have an iron crank if we send to England for it, and all the modern improvements. I move that Charlie, Ricker, Yelf, and Joe Griffin go to work hewing the timber; and that we send Uncle Isaac off to the westward to learn the new improvements, and come home and build it.”

Having agreed upon all these matters, they separated; and that is what became of Charlie’s farming that year.

The pond, of which the brook was an outlet, furnishing a steady supply of water, not affected by droughts, offered a splendid mill privilege. The dam was almost built by nature, and the labor of constructing the whole was greatly lessened, as the timber grew upon the spot.

Instead of going to work upon the mill, Charlie, who knew that the moment it was noised abroad that a mill was to be built on the outlet to Beaver Pond, the price of timber land in the immediate vicinity would rise, started off to Portsmouth,

where the proprietor lived, and bought the whole lot, between him and Joe Griffin, which was heavily timbered with pine and hard wood. It was not the desire of speculation that influenced him: he wanted ship-timber, spars, and lumber, and didn't want to strip all the forest from his home farm. Charlie loved the trees: a bare and barren landscape had no charms for him.

Uncle Isaac did not go to the westward to see the new improvements, but to Thomaston, where General Knox (with whom he was acquainted, having served under him in the war of independence) was building mills, and making all kinds of improvements.

The general, who was a noble, hospitable man, received Uncle Isaac most cordially, took him to his house, and gave him every facility in his power. He looked over the mills, made his observations, and took plans of the machinery, came home, and went to work.

Ricker now proved a most valuable man: he had been accustomed to mill work, and knew how to take care of a saw. Since his reformation, he had renewed his engagement, broken off by his loose habits. He went home, got married, took charge of the mill, and went to sawing out plank for the vessel.

Charlie built a first-rate frame blacksmith's shop, with a brick chimney. John came home, bringing a complete set of tools.

Fred was fully occupied in getting fish ready to send in the "Hard-Scrabble" to Madeira, and exceedingly interested in some timber Ricker was sawing to order in the mill, and a cellar Uncle Sam Elwell was stoning not far from his store.

It was snapping times now all round, everybody on the clean jump from morning to night. The mill was going night and day, and the short click of the saw rang in the still midnight through the old woods, that had before echoed only to the war-whoop of the red man, or the blows of the settler's axe.

The younger portion of the community were wide awake, ready for anything, and a spirit of emulation was rife among them. Walter Griffin, Fred's clerk, kicked out of the traces at once; he went to Fred, and said, "Mr. Williams, I must leave."

"Leave!" cried Fred, in amazement. "What for?"

"I want to go to sea."

Fred more than liked Walter: he loved him;

he was a splendid boy, industrious, trustworthy, and smart; but his wrist-joints were three inches below the sleeve of his jacket, for his mother couldn't make clothes as fast as he grew.

"Why, Walter, I didn't dream of your ever leaving me. I want you, when you are older, to go into business with me. Don't you like me?"

The tears came into the boy's eyes in a moment.

"*Like* you, Mr. Williams! My own father ain't nearer to me: you've done everything for me; but, Mr. Williams, I never was made to weigh flour, measure molasses and cloth; it don't agree with our kind of people. I can't stand it; I shall die: indeed I can't."

"But you wouldn't leave me now, when I have so much to do?"

"Not by any means, sir. I don't want to go till the big ship is done."

"I think you'll miss it, Walter."

"I don't, sir. I don't see why I can't do as well at sea as Isaac Murch. I'll leave it to Uncle Isaac."

"Uncle Isaac, he's always ready to shove any boy ahead."

"Didn't you like to have him shove you ahead when you was a boy, sir?"

That was a thrust which Fred knew not how to parry, and he was silent.

“Don’t feel so bad, Mr. Williams. My brother William is only eighteen months younger than I am; he would like to come in here, and would get well broke in before I shall want to go.”

“But he’s a Griffin, too,” said Fred, despondingly, “and will clear out just as he becomes useful.”

When the ship was ready for sea, half the boys in the neighborhood wanted to go in her. Isaac took four, and several young men, who had been some in coasters, as ordinary seamen.

She was called the Casco.

Fred was married to Elizabeth Rhines the day before she sailed, the wedding being somewhat hastened, in order that Isaac might be present.

This was a most eventful year. Uncle Isaac, one Saturday night, created surprise enough by riding down to the store with his wife in a wagon, the first one that had ever been seen in the place.

“You’ve got yourself into business, Isaac,” said the captain. “Either you or Charlie have got to make me one this winter.”

“Then I must do it, Benjamin; for Charlie’s got enough to do this winter to take care of that baby.”

Seth Warren assumed command of the Hard-Scrabble, that still continued to make money for her owners, who built more vessels, and acquired property, of which they made a most praiseworthy use, in affording employment to others, and doing all in their power to promote the welfare of society; and the prosperity and happiness of hundreds resulted from that pile of boards Captain Rhines navigated to Cuba; and fleet and beautiful vessels, visiting the most distant seas, were the successors of the Hard-Scrabble.









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